



Proposed Changes for the Cleanup of Buried Wastes at the Hanford Site (M-91, M-16)

U.S. Department of Energy - Washington State Department of Ecology - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE), the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (the Tri-Party Agreement agencies) are responsible for Hanford cleanup. They want your input on proposed changes to the Hanford Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order (Tri-Party Agreement). The proposed changes will establish and modify schedules for the cleanup of several types of waste at Hanford (M-91 and M-16 milestone series).



Retrieval of buried transuranic waste began in October ahead of a Tri-Party Agreement milestone.

Background

The original Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) M-91 milestone series established schedules for the construction and operation of facilities needed to manage transuranic (TRU) and low-level waste (LLW). The Tri-Parties initiated negotiations to revise these milestones to place greater emphasis on treatment of waste. Negotiations also consolidated current hazardous waste management issues into one lawsuit resulting in a settlement agreement whereby the parties propose TPA milestones establishing volumes of wastes that must be retrieved and/or treated by specific dates and contingent transuranic mixed waste milestones that will become effective depending on whether DOE or Ecology prevail on hazardous wastes issues in a pending lawsuit. The Tri-Parties are requesting comments on proposed M-91 and M-16 TPA milestones.



On October 24, the Tri-Parties announced they had reached agreement on the management of waste at the Hanford site. The agreement proposes significant changes to the TPA M-91 milestone series. These changes focus on accelerating the retrieval, designation and processing of post-1970 suspect TRU waste and treatment of mixed low-level waste (MLLW).

The M-16 TPA milestone change package provides for a work plan describing how USDOE plans to develop capabilities to manage TRU, TRU mixed (TRUM), and suspect TRUM discovered through the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) process. Together the M-91 and M-16 milestone TPA change packages ensure there will be comprehensive USDOE management of TRUM wastes.

In addition to the proposed changes to the TPA, the agreement defers to the judicial system the decision on the authority of Ecology to require treatment or certification of mixed TRU waste. If the court finds in favor of Ecology, the change package contains contingent milestones that would go into effect.

Public Comment

The Tri-Party Agencies want your feedback on the proposed schedule changes for the cleanup of buried wastes. The public comment period for the draft change packages will be December 1, 2003 through February 13, 2004.



Fact Sheet



Drums of waste, simulated examples shown here, are x-rayed at the Waste Receiving and Processing Facility as part of the process to prepare them for shipment offsite.

What are we proposing?

The proposed changes lay out a time table for retrieval, designation, processing and storage of mixed waste. Some of the major activities include:

- Begin retrieval of contact-handled retrievably stored waste by November 15, 2003
- Begin treating remote-handled and large container MLLW no later than June 30, 2008
- Complete retrieval of contact-handled retrievably stored waste by December 31, 2010
- Begin retrieval of remote-handled retrievably stored waste (e.g., suspect TRU waste) no later than January 1, 2011
- Complete retrieval of remote-handled retrievably stored waste by December 31, 2018
- Submit a CERCLA TRU/TRUM waste processing capability implementation work plan by September 30, 2006

How you can become involved

A 75-day public comment period on the draft change packages will be from **December 1 through February 13, 2004**. We want your feedback on these proposed changes to the Tri-Party Agreement. The agencies will consider all comments relevant to the change packages before the proposed changes are made final. At this time no public meetings have been requested. If you are interested in a public meeting in your community, please contact Yvonne Sherman (509) 376-6216 or Mary Anne Wuennecke (509) 736-3036. To request a copy of the proposed changes or submit comments, please contact

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The Draft Change Packages can be viewed online at <http://www.hanford.gov/tpa/changelist.htm>

The Settlement Agreement can be viewed online at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs.nwp/pdf/settlement.pdf>

The proposed changes are also available for review at the
Public Information Repositories listed below.

HANFORD PUBLIC INFORMATION REPOSITORY LOCATIONS

Portland

Portland State University
Branford Price and Millar Library
934 SW Harrison
Attn: Michael Bowman (503) 725-3690

Richland

U.S. Department of Energy Public Reading Room
Washington State University, Tri-Cities
Consolidated Information Center, Room 101-L
2770 University Drive
Attn: Janice Parthree (509) 372-7443

Seattle

University of Washington
Suzzallo Library
Government Publications Division
Attn: Eleanor Chase (206) 543-4664

Spokane

Gonzaga University Foley Center
East 502 Boone
Attn: Sarah Nelson (509) 323-6548

Information Repository web site address:
<http://www2.hanford.gov/arpir/>

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