



Proposed Changes to K-Basin Sludge and K-Basin Cleanup Milestones (M-34 and M-16)

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

The U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Washington State Department of Ecology (the Tri-Party Agreement agencies) responsible for Hanford cleanup want your input on proposed changes to the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA). The proposed changes outline a strategy and schedule for accelerating K-Basin sludge treatment and disposal, removing the K-Basins and starting cleanup of the soils under the Basins that were used to store Hanford's Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF).

Background

The K-West and K-East Basins are located in the 100 Area on the Hanford Site near the Columbia River. These two basins were built in the 1950s to serve as temporary storage for spent nuclear fuel (SNF) from the K and N Reactors. Each basin is 125 feet long, 67 feet wide and 21 feet deep. They provided under water storage for 2100 metric tons of SNF. The SNF included intact and corroded (crumbling) fuel rods. The floors of the basins contain a collection of leftovers - degrading SNF, bits of materials from other parts in the basins, and the natural accumulation of insects and windblown dust - referred to as sludge (approximately 50 cubic meters).

Fuel removal from the basins began in December 2000. To date, approximately 90% of the fuel has been removed from the basins, dried, and placed in containers (multi-canister over packs) that are housed in a specially designed facility. When completed, the cleanout of the fuel, sludge, water and debris from the K-Basins will remove approximately 95% of the radioactivity from Hanford's 100 Area.



Spent Fuel Assemblies in the K-East Basin

What are we proposing?

During the month of April the Tri-Party agencies conducted a series of negotiations to define a new strategy for the completion of cleanup activities at the K Basins. The draft change packages negotiated by the agencies revise milestone schedules that accelerate cleanup of the K-East and K-West Basins and treatment and disposal of the basin sludge. The schedule for the retrieval of sludge is slightly delayed from its original date; however, there are new milestones that require the sludge be containerized until retrieved and treated for final disposal at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico. This interim containerization of the sludge in the basins provides additional environmental protection. In addition, new milestones create schedules for soil cleanup after the basins are removed.

Public Comment Period

The Tri-Party Agencies want your feedback on proposed changes to K-Basin Sludge and K-Basin Cleanup Milestones.

The public comment period is from **June 1 through July 16, 2004.**

Fact Sheet

Some of the milestones outlined in the M-34 and M-16 draft change packages include:

- Initiate containerization of K-East sludge by October 31, 2004; complete by March 1, 2005
- Complete containerization of K-West sludge by June 30, 2006
- Initiate treatment of sludge by February 28, 2007
- Complete treatment of sludge by October 31, 2007
- Initiate soil cleanup at K-East Basin by April 30, 2007
- Complete removal of the K-Basins and their content by March 31, 2009.

How you can become involved

We will hold a 45-day public comment period on the proposed changes from **June 1 through July 16, 2004**. We want your feedback on these proposed schedule changes to the TPA. 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 at yvonne_t_sherman@rl.gov or (509) 376-6216. Please submit comments to:

Jim Todd
U.S. Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office
P.O. Box 550 (A5-18)
Richland, Wa. 99352
Fax: (509) 376-6621
james_w_todd@rl.gov

Larry Gadbois
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Hanford Project Office
712 Swift Blvd., Suite 5
Richland, Wa. 99352
Fax: (509) 376-2396
gadbois.larry@epa.gov

If you have questions or would like to request a copy of the draft change packages, call the Hanford Cleanup Line 800-321-2008.

The documents can be viewed on line at <http://www.hanford.gov/tpa/changelist.htm>

The documents 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/>

Fact Sheet

Department of Energy
P.O. 550 MSIN A7-75
Richland WA, 99352