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DOE EVAPORATOR SAVES MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR COST OF NEW TANK

Hanford's evaporator has once again saved U.S. taxpayers millions of dollars by successfully reducing the volume of Hanford's tank wastes by another million-plus gallons. This means more than eight million gallons of radioactive wastes have been eliminated since 1994, saving some \$600 million, according to Ami Sidpara, Project Director, Tank Operations for the Department of Energy's Richland Operations Office. "Every time we reduce waste volume by one million gallons we avoid spending about \$75 million to build a new tank," Sidpara said.

"For the first time since 1994, the evaporator operated at 100 percent efficiency, and set two daily production records without an unscheduled shutdown," said plant manager Jim Geary. The first record was set when the evaporator reduced volume by more than 78,000 gallons. The next day, a new record of 80,000 gallons were evaporated. As a result of this record setting evaporator campaign, there is approximately 54 million gallons of radioactive wastes left in Hanford's 177 underground tanks.

The evaporator operates like a tea kettle. As the waste passes through the system, much of the water that makes up the volume is boiled off. Depending on the waste being processed, the evaporator can reduce the volume by 80 percent or more.

"Our goal for continuous improvement in safe operations and cost effective performance is clearly being demonstrated by our staff working in the Tank Program," said Jackson Kinzer, DOE manager for the Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS).

This latest effort started a month ahead of schedule and was completed in 20 days instead of the planned 25 days. "I'm extremely proud of the people who made this happen. They are real pros who continually demonstrate their ability to get the job done safely," said Roger Bacon, Westinghouse Hanford Company manager for TWRS.

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