

ANNOUNCEMENT

Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office
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To: ALL HANFORD SITE EMPLOYEES

Subject: 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF B REACTOR ACTIVATION

Tomorrow marks the 70th anniversary of perhaps the most important event in the history of the Hanford Site. During the late evening of September 26, 1944, in a moment that would ultimately change the course of World War II and of history, the control rods were pulled out of the B Reactor, and the reactor went critical for the first time. That moment marked the culmination of unimaginable scientific and engineering achievement and was among the most significant events in the dawn of the atomic age.

While many at the Hanford Engineer Works famously worked without awareness of the ultimate purpose of their labor, they were joined together in America's – indeed, the Allies' – steadfast dedication to winning World War II. The men and women who built B Reactor – the world's first full scale nuclear production reactor – not only made their mark on history, but also on the fields of science, technology, medicine, engineering and defense.

On every single day of the past seven decades – literally generations – tens of thousands of workers at the Hanford Site, and those who have supported them, have continued on the path whose gate opened on that September evening. Every one of us today is part of that history and that lineage, and I hope this anniversary is a reason to stop for a moment to think back to where we started.

We are extremely proud of our work to preserve the B Reactor National Historic Landmark, to make it available to the public through our public access program, and to make its story available to this and future generations. More than 55,000 people have visited the B Reactor National Historic Landmark since 2009 from all 50 states and over 75 countries worldwide to see this DOE "signature facility."

If you and your family have not toured this remarkable piece of world history, I encourage you to do so. The Reactor is open for tours on a regular schedule from April through September of each year. You can find more information on the B Reactor web page, at www.manhattanprojectbreactor.hanford.gov/

For 50 years, the workers at Hanford helped protect this nation. Today, you continue to protect our citizens in a different way, by proving that no job is beyond capable, creative, and determined Americans, by cleaning up Hanford's legacy waste, and by making the site land safe for other uses in the future. Thank you for your contributions to writing the next chapter in Hanford's history.

Doug S. Shoop
Acting Manager