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## **DOE Statement on Tank Ay-102 Pumping**

**Hanford, Washington** - The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of River Protection (ORP) and Hanford tank farms contractor Washington River Protection Solutions (WRPS) are evaluating recently identified, anticipated changes in the amount of waste between the inner and outer shells (the annulus) of Hanford double-shell tank AY-102.

Since March 3, DOE and WRPS have been retrieving waste from Tank AY-102, and to date approximately 95 percent of the material has been retrieved. Early on the morning of April 17, crews identified an increase in the waste level in the tank's annulus. Early on the morning of April 18, a slight decrease in the height of the waste in the annulus was detected. Out of an abundance of caution, DOE and WRPS are in the process of evaluating the tank's condition. Additionally, WRPS has visual and chemical indications that waste has not reached the environment.

DOE and WRPS are committed to ensuring the safety of the Hanford workforce, the public and the environment.

### **Background**

- At 3:30 a.m., on the morning of April 17, with approximately 14" of waste left in the primary tank of tank AY-102, an annulus leak detector activated during retrieval operations. The annulus is the space between the primary and secondary tank. AY-102 has been undergoing active retrieval operations and approximately



95% of the material has already been removed.

- ORP and WRPS anticipated the possibility of additional leakage into the annulus before pumping operations concluded.
- Procedures were developed in advance, and the annulus pumping equipment had already been installed.
- As of Sunday early afternoon, approximately 8 inches of tank waste had entered the annulus.
- On the morning of April 18, a decrease of less than an inch in the height of the waste in the annulus was detected. This equates to about 180 gallons.
- Once changes in the level of waste in the annulus were detected, WRPS restricted personnel from access to the tank in order to keep workers safe while commencing an evaluation of the condition.
- As of 12:30 p.m. April 18, there was no change in the level of material in the leak detection pit.
- WRPS took the pH level of the leak detection pit (LDP) April 18 as well and there was no change in pH. Because the material in the tanks is kept at a high pH level, if material has leaked into the LDP the pH would rise.
- DOE and WRPS expect to begin retrieving waste from the annulus within the next two days.

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