

H A N F O R D

PROGRESS

A PUBLICATION OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY FOR ALL HANFORD SITE EMPLOYEES

SPECIAL EDITION OF THE

Hanford Reach

Hanford Site Employee News

January 27, 2003



I am proud to serve as Secretary of Energy during the Department's 25th Anniversary celebration. My congratulations and thanks to the many talented employees who have worked so hard for so many years on behalf of the American people. There is much to show for your dedicated efforts.

In 1977 the new Department of Energy brought together for the first time not only most of the government's energy programs but also science and technology programs and defense responsibilities that included the design, construction and testing of nuclear weapons. At that time, a score of organizational entities from a dozen departments and agencies, each with its own history and traditions, joined together.

Now, in addition to the diversity that characterized our beginnings — which over these past 25 years has proven to be one of our great strengths — we share a common history. But more importantly, we share a common future. And we share a common overarching mission: national security.

As we look ahead, I am optimistic that we will fulfill our responsibilities and our success will be a great contribution to our energy and national security for generations to come.

Spencer Abraham
October 1, 2002





DOE has led Hanford Site through Cold War, environmental cleanup

As the Department of Energy celebrates 25 years of serving the American people, Hanford employees can point with pride to the site's defense-production mission that helped win the Cold War. But an even greater point of pride is our success in shifting gears to concentrate on environmental cleanup.

When President Jimmy Carter first proposed the cabinet-level Department of Energy in 1977, the Hanford Site, under the Atomic Energy Commission, was in its production mode. There were those who warned of the environmental consequences, but those concerns were secondary to the urgent task of making plutonium for the nation's nuclear arsenal.

In that era 25 years ago, Hanford progress was measured in terms of its output.

But the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, and our nemesis, the Soviet Union, began to crumble. We had truly won the Cold War. We talked of nuclear disarmament rather than a nuclear deterrent. Plutonium production ceased, and DOE released its first "Five-Year Plan" in 1989 for the remediation of its production sites. The State of Washington joined the department and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in signing the Tri-Party Agreement — a document that continues to evolve and guide the Hanford cleanup.

In 1990, DOE issued an updated five-year plan, giving top priority to bringing DOE facilities into compliance with environmental regulations and focusing its technology development on health hazards to workers and the public.

Today, we measure our progress in terms of soil and groundwater remediation, safeguarding our workers, making the site's facilities safe for future generations, and protecting the Columbia River.

Those are today's yardsticks for progress, and this report marks the status of our important mission at the 25th anniversary of the U.S. Department of Energy.

DOE and Hanford — we've come a long way together. ■



President Jimmy Carter signs the Department of Energy Organization Act merging the Federal Energy Administration and the Energy Research and Development Administration, as well as energy-related offices in a half-dozen federal departments and agencies, to form the new Department of Energy in 1977.