



Steady pumping continues in Hanford tank farms

Pumping retrievable liquids out of Hanford's 149 older single-shell waste tanks into newer, safer double-shell tanks continues to reduce the risk of future tank leaks. Since 1998, about 2.9 million gallons of retrievable liquid waste have been moved into the double-shell tanks, and approximately 380,000 gallons of that total have been pumped just since last October.

The retrievable liquids have been pumped from 134 of the 149 single-shell tanks. Contractor CH2M HILL Hanford Group has completely pumped one tank since October.

The 15 remaining tanks are covered by a consent decree with the State of Washington. That agreement requires removing the rest of the retrievable liquid waste from these tanks (about 365,000 gallons) by October 2004. Three of those tanks have had their retrievable liquid waste pumped out and are being evaluated for completion. The other 12 are being pumped now.

The solid waste (saltcake and sludge) that remains in the single-shell tanks is scheduled to be retrieved for treatment so the tanks can be closed. Methods are being developed to remove the solid waste. Two possible methods that have been demonstrated include "vacuuming" it out of the tanks, and dissolving and pumping it. ■