

# Normal work resumes after Ecology order suspended

As a consequence of an administrative order issued by the Washington State Department of Ecology on April 30, the Department of Energy - both the Richland Operations Office and the Office of River Protection - directed all Hanford contractors to stop any operations that would either generate new mixed waste that cannot be treated within a year or that would add to the backlog of untreated waste.

That stop-work order affected operations at the Plutonium Finishing Plant, the analytical laboratories, the Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility and other facilities. Some tank pumping and some work at the K Basins were affected as well, but the stabilization of plutonium at the Plutonium Finishing Plant was the only project that was totally halted.

After a meeting between DOE and state officials, however, Ecology announced early last week that it was granting a 30-day suspension of a portion of the administrative order, allowing normal operations to resume. The 30-day suspension ends June 13.

“We are using this time to continue to evaluate the long-term impact of the administrative order on our operations,” said Fluor Hanford President Dave Van Leuven in a message to employees, “and we will support the Department of Energy as they continue to work with the state to come to a mutually acceptable agreement.” ■