



DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

HANFORD

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RICHLAND
OPERATIONS OFFICE
United States Department of Energy

News Release



Department of Energy completes chromium cleanup along Columbia River

Cleanup work removes major source of contamination to groundwater at Hanford Site

RICHLAND, Wash. — More than two million tons of chromium-contaminated soil have been moved away from several areas near the Columbia River at the Hanford Site. Under the direction of the U.S. Department of Energy Richland Operations Office (DOE-RL), contractor Washington Closure Hanford (WCH) excavated chromium-contaminated soil from a set of waste sites, disposed of the contaminated soil and backfilled the waste sites with clean soil. Work is now ongoing to restore the sites with native vegetation.

The contaminated soil contained an estimated total of 129 tons of concentrated chromium chemical from the B, C, D, F and H Reactor areas. The chromium-contaminated soil was transported, treated when necessary to meet disposal facility requirements, and disposed at the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility – Hanford’s onsite, regulated disposal facility for low-level, radioactive and hazardous materials.

“Removing the source of contamination is a critical step in protecting groundwater, and removing chromium while it is in the soil will significantly reduce the amount of time that our groundwater pump-and-treat facilities are operated” said Mark French, DOE’s federal project director for the river corridor.

Recently, workers near Hanford’s D and DR Reactor areas completed remediation of the largest source of chromium contamination near the Columbia River. The work involved digging 85 feet to groundwater at three waste sites: 100-D-100, D-30 and D-104.

Because of their size, the dig sites were engineered like open pit mines. One of them – known as D-100 – covered the area of more than seven-and-a-half football fields at ground surface and about one football field at the bottom.

“Removing the chromium contamination keeps it from being driven into the groundwater by rain and snow and is a major success for protecting the river and groundwater from future contamination,” said Rob Cantwell, WCH director of closure operations. “We take a lot of pride in knowing we are protecting the environment and the contamination is no longer a threat to the Columbia River.”

View photo gallery: <http://go.usa.gov/cTrF4>

View video: <http://www.wch-rcc.com/externalshare/>

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*The **U.S. Department of Energy’s Richland Operations Office** is responsible for several major cleanup projects on the Hanford Site, including cleanout and demolition of the high-hazard Plutonium Finishing Plant, demolition of excess facilities, excavation of contaminated soil and solid waste, and treatment of contaminated groundwater, as well as Hanford Site infrastructure. The office oversees approximately \$1 billion in annual funding for Hanford Site work that is conducted by a Federal and contractor workforce of approximately 4,200 personnel. Visit www.hanford.gov.*

***Washington Closure Hanford** is a limited liability company led by AECOM and its partners Bechtel National, and CH2M. The team has demolished 323 buildings, cleaned up 571 hazardous waste sites, disposed of 11.4 million tons of contaminated material, and placed two nuclear reactors in interim safe storage. Washington Closure is ahead of schedule and has saved more than \$300 million dollars in cleanup costs.*