

Aerial view of S, SX and U single-shell Tank Farms and the SY double-shell Tank Farm in the 200 West Area of the Hanford Site.



**Comment Period**  
Feb. 23 – March 26, 2026

**Draft WIR Evaluation**  
<https://pdw.hanford.gov/document/AR-32646>

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### Purpose

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is holding a 30-day public comment period on its Draft Waste Incidental to Reprocessing (WIR) Evaluation for the 200 West Area Tank Treatment Mission at the Hanford Site in Washington state.

### Hanford Site Background

The 580-square-mile Hanford Site in southeastern Washington state was created in 1943 as part of the Manhattan Project to produce plutonium for the nation's defense program. Today waste management and environmental cleanup are the main missions at Hanford, focusing on treating tank waste through the Direct-Feed Low-Activity Waste Program and cleanup on the Central Plateau, while also conducting Site operations for the safety of our workforce and the public.

### Key Facts

- With Hanford's Waste Treatment Plant solidifying tank waste in glass, Hanford is building on that momentum, in alignment with existing legal commitments, to advance additional tank waste treatment opportunities.
- The draft WIR Evaluation is consistent with the Holistic Agreement between DOE, the Environmental Protection Agency and the State of Washington.



# Draft Waste Incidental to Reprocessing Evaluation for the Hanford Site 200 West Area Tank Treatment Mission

## Key Facts (cont.)

- The effort involves retrieving waste from single-shell tanks (SSTs) in Hanford's 200 West Area by 2040, including grouting the low-activity portion of the waste for disposal outside of Washington state.
- Waste stored in double-shell tanks in SY Tank Farm will also be removed and solidified in grout for disposal at one or more licensed, regulated commercial facilities outside the state of Washington.
- The parallel approach of utilizing grout and glass builds on the 2,000-gallon Test Bed Initiative that successfully demonstrated a pathway for offsite commercial treatment utilizing grout and disposal out of state.
- This is part of an innovative effort to advance solutions to enable tank waste to be treated and disposed of sooner and more efficiently without sacrificing safety or effectiveness.
- Once the Draft WIR Evaluation is complete, DOE will prepare and post a final WIR Evaluation and potential WIR Determination.

## 200 West Area Tank Treatment Mission Overview

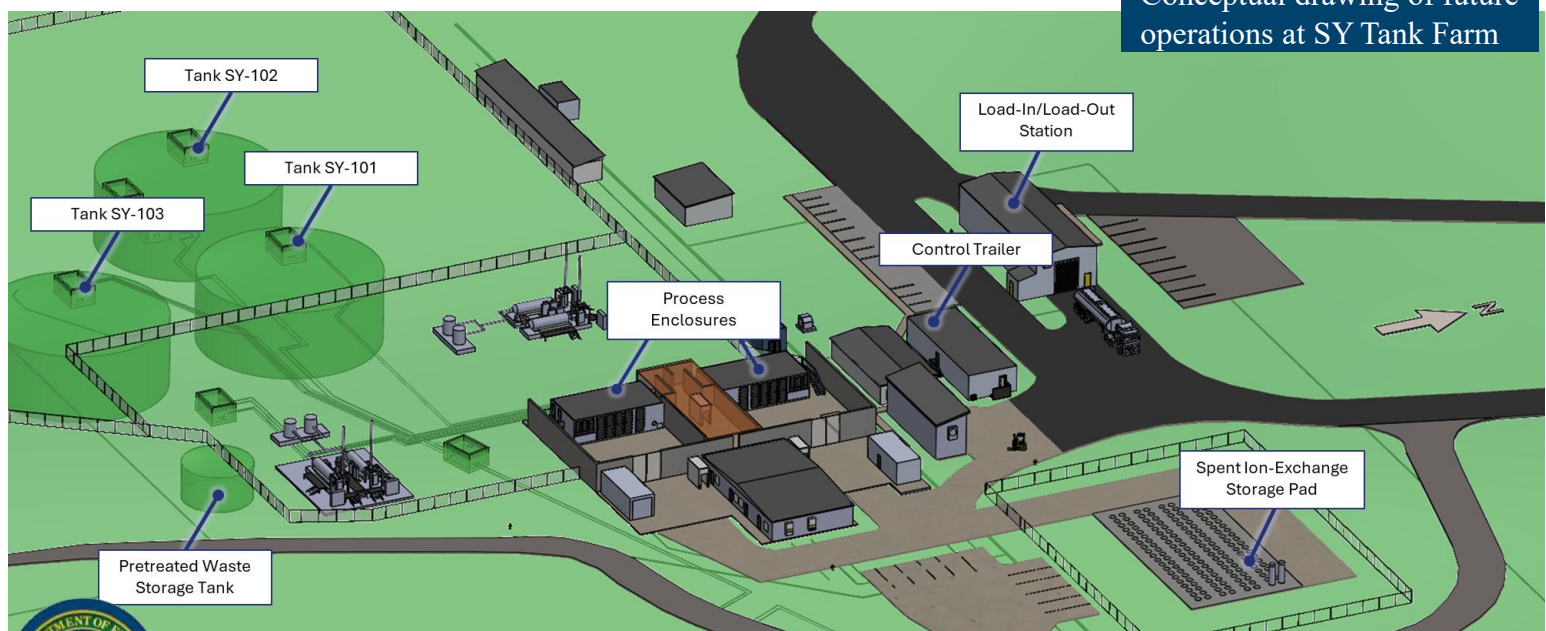
Tank waste will be pumped from Tank SY-101 into two process modules. Each module is equipped with a process enclosure containing two filters, four ion-exchange columns, one delay tank and an ancillary enclosure.

DOE would dispose of the treated and solidified waste at one or more off-site, licensed, commercial disposal facilities outside of Washington state; potentially EnergySolutions' Disposal Facility near Clive, Utah, and/or the Waste Control Specialists Federal Storage Facility near Andrews, Texas.

## Benefits

- Retrieve single-shell tanks reducing environmental risk on the Hanford site
- Remove a significant amount of tank waste radioactivity earlier than planned
- Remove constraints on the 222-S Laboratory by creating double-shell tank space in Tank SY-101 for laboratory waste
- Establish a parallel capability to the Direct-Feed Low-Activity Waste Program for treating tank waste
- Reduce reliance on the single cross-site transfer line to deliver untreated liquid waste

Conceptual drawing of future operations at SY Tank Farm



# DOE is Committed to an Open and Transparent Process

DOE has made no decision on where the waste covered in the Draft WIR will be grouted or the routes that will be used to safely transport it out of Washington state. Any decision on solidification location and transport will prioritize safety, will be based on sound science, and will be consistent with Department of Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency, and other federal regulations.

## Consultation with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission

DOE is consulting with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the Draft WIR Evaluation. The Commission is expected to provide a technical evaluation that will help inform a potential WIR Determination.

## Public Involvement

DOE is committed to an open and transparent process and looks forward to input from states, tribal nations, stakeholders and the public.

A 30-day comment period will run Feb 23. – March 26, 2026.

There are several opportunities to learn more about the evaluation.

- Review the [Draft WIR Evaluation](#).
- Provide comments via email or mail during the comment period.

**Please submit all comments in writing by March 26**, electronically, to [WIR\\_WATT@rl.gov](mailto:WIR_WATT@rl.gov) (preferred) or in writing to:

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



**Q: Would this solidification process for Hanford Site tank waste replace vitrification (immobilizing in glass) as a method for safely disposing of tank waste?**

A: No. Waste vitrification is moving forward as planned. This represents a dual approach for a portion of Hanford's low-level waste.

**Q: What criteria does DOE use to determine if waste is incidental to reprocessing?**

A1: Key radionuclides can be removed to the maximum extent technically and economically practical.

A2: The waste can be managed to meet safety requirements comparable to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's performance objectives for low-level waste disposal.

A3: The waste can be incorporated in a solid physical form at a concentration that does not exceed the concentration limits for Class C low-level waste.



**We want to hear from you!**

