

Statement:

“The Department of Energy is committed to the safe cleanup of the Hanford site. The cumulative rate of seepage from the 6 tanks is currently estimated to be less than three gallons a day. To put that amount in perspective, roughly 1 million gallons of material previously leaked into the soil from the single-shell tanks at Hanford over a period of decades. To address those tanks that were leaking, by 2005, the Department removed all the drainable liquid possible out of the single-shell tanks, into double-shell tanks. We have not observed any discernible change in the contamination levels in the monitoring wells, but continue to monitor it very closely.”

Background:

After having removed the pumpable liquids from the tanks we stabilized, we have been proceeding with retrieving waste from those tanks, as prioritized by the State of Washington and the Department of Energy. Those retrievals continue on schedule. The waste retrieved is stored in double-shell tanks that are newer and more robust than the single-shell tanks until the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant can be brought online to vitrify the waste in a stable glass form for permanent disposal.