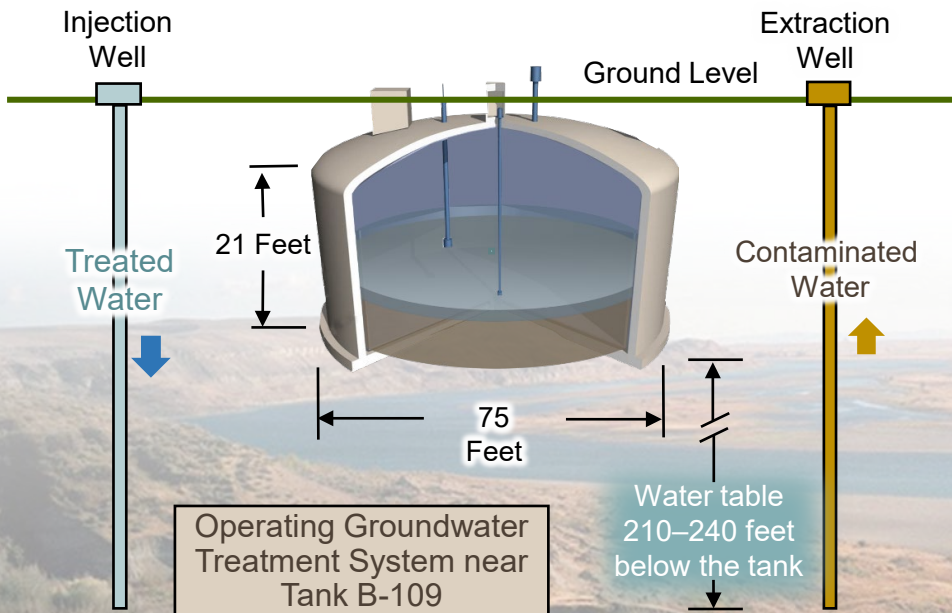


The Department of Energy (DOE) has determined that underground waste-storage Tank B-109 is likely leaking to the soil beneath it; however, there is no increased health or safety risk to Hanford workers or the public.

Contamination in the tank area is not a new issue and mitigation actions have been in place for years. Active groundwater treatment systems operating in the area were installed several years ago to capture and treat contamination resulting from the discharge of approximately 52 million gallons of contaminated liquids to the surrounding soils during historical operations to produce materials for the U.S. nuclear weapons program.

Tank B-109 was previously emptied of pumpable liquids, leaving a very small amount of liquid waste in the tank. The water table in the area ranges from 210 to 240 feet below Tank B-109. DOE estimates it could take more than 25 years for any contamination from Tank B-109 to reach the water table. The contamination would then be captured and removed by the groundwater treatment systems in place.

Design work is underway for the installation of an interim surface barrier over the B Tank Farm to prevent water from rain and snowmelt from pushing existing contaminants to the groundwater. Construction is expected to begin in 2028. Safely managing all Hanford tank waste is a top priority for DOE. When it comes to the overall long-term tank waste mission, DOE continues to focus on safe, efficient and effective tank-waste treatment capabilities.



Tank B-109

Key Takeaways

- There is no increased risk to the Hanford Site workforce or the public.
- The tank was previously emptied of pumpable liquids, leaving a very small amount of liquid waste in the tank.
- Contamination in this area is not new and mitigation actions have been in place for years.
- Existing groundwater treatment systems will capture and treat any contamination that may reach groundwater.
- DOE continues to assess and explore other capabilities to reduce the release of contaminants to the environment.

