

## Public Comment Period on Proposed Update to Hanford Dangerous Waste Permit

# *Proposed Modifications to the Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility*

The U.S. Department of Energy Richland Operations Office (DOE-RL) is holding a 60-day public comment period from November 27, 2017, to January 31, 2018, for a Class 3 Permit Modification to the [Hanford Dangerous Waste Permit](#). The modification addresses the preparation of the [Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility \(WESF\)](#) for the transfer of cesium and strontium capsules to a new proposed storage facility for interim storage.

This fact sheet is for one of two related public comment periods running concurrently. Another fact sheet, located on the [Hanford Events Calendar](#), is for the new proposed interim storage facility.

November 2017

U.S. Department of Energy

## Sequence of Class 3 Permit Modifications

As per [WAC 173-303-830](#), "Permit Changes," this Class 3 Permit Modification will go through the required public review process that includes this fact sheet, newspaper advertisement, and public meeting.

## WESF Background

Located in the 200 East Area of the Hanford Facility, the WESF was completed in 1973, with operations beginning the following year. From 1974 to 1985, radioactive cesium and strontium isotopes, recovered from high-level waste tanks, were placed in stainless steel capsules and stored in concrete pool cells in WESF, where they remain today. The waste has been designated as mixed waste and is managed under the [Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976](#) (RCRA).

The 1,335 cesium chloride capsules and 601 strontium fluoride capsules are stored in pools filled with water to protect workers from high levels of radioactivity, and to help keep the capsules cool. WESF does not receive or treat any additional waste.

While the capsules are currently in a safe and compliant configuration, WESF is an aging facility. The possibility of a release of radioactive material from the WESF pool cells exists, should an unlikely event cause the loss of pool water. DOE-RL has proposed moving the capsules to dry, interim storage at a location to be called the Capsule Storage Area. The capsules cannot be transferred to interim dry storage until related modifications are made to the WESF.



WESF is located in the 200 East Area

## Public Comment

We want your feedback on this proposed modification. The public comment period will run **November 27, 2017 to January 31, 2018.**

A public meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, December 13, 2017, at the Richland Public Library, 955 Northgate Drive.

## Summary of Preparing WESF for Transferring Capsules

A Class 3 Permit Modification request will be submitted for WESF, which will include the necessary modifications needed to facilitate capsule loading and transfer operations.

These proposed modifications to WESF include:

- Installation of capsule packaging and loading equipment
- Modification of indoor loading port to be level and smooth and to support the weight and transfer of casks
- Improvement of outdoor loading area to facilitate cask movement and meet transfer criteria

When the modifications are complete, the capsules will be loaded into storage casks designed with radiation shielding to protect workers and to ensure no release of contamination occurs during the process. The casks will then be transported to the Capsule Storage Area.

## Path Forward

This proposed modification includes a 60-day public comment period, along with an opportunity to learn more at a public meeting. The public meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 13 at the Richland Public Library and will include a question-and-answer session.

DOE-RL recognizes the importance for the public to be informed in a format that provides the entire sequence of activities. To fully understand the background and details, the meeting will also include a presentation on the plans for the related proposed Capsule Storage Area. The WESF presentation will begin at 5:30 p.m. and the proposed Capsule Storage Area presentation will follow at 6:30 p.m.

The permittees' compliance history during the life of the permit being modified is available from the Washington State Department of Ecology's contact person.

Electronic access to the proposed permit modification and supporting documentation is available at the Administrative Record, 2440 Stevens Drive, Richland, WA. The documentation is also available in the Public Information Repositories.



Cask model outside of Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility (artist's rendering)



Example view of a cask container

## How to get involved...

A 60-day public comment period on this proposed modification to the *Hanford Facility Sitewide Dangerous Waste Permit* will run from November 27, 2017, to January 31, 2018. The public meeting will be held on December 13, 2017, at the Richland Public Library, 955 Northgate Drive, Richland, WA. The WESF preparations presentation will start at 5:30 p.m. and the Capsule Storage Area presentation will follow at 6:30 p.m.

The DOE-RL point of contact is Rich Buel, [Richard.buel@rl.doe.gov](mailto:Richard.buel@rl.doe.gov), (509) 376-3375.

The Ecology point of contact is Stephanie Schleif, [Stephanie.schleif@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:Stephanie.schleif@ecy.wa.gov), (509) 372-7929.

Please submit comments on the proposed changes by **January 31, 2018**, via eComments, to:



WESF: <http://wt.ecology.commentinput.com/?id=QkDYA>

or mail to: Daina McFadden

Washington State Department of Ecology

3100 Port of Benton Boulevard

Richland, WA 99354

Supporting Documentation: <http://www.hanford.gov/pageAction.cfm/calendar?&IndEventID=8658>

### Electronic access is available for review at the locations listed below

#### HANFORD PUBLIC INFORMATION REPOSITORY AND RESOURCE CENTER LOCATIONS

##### Portland

Portland State University Library  
Branford Price Millar Library  
1875 SW Park Avenue  
Portland, OR 97201  
Attn: Bertrand Robinson (503) 725-4128  
Map: <http://bit.ly/1K7BfuK>

##### Richland

U.S. Department of Energy Public Reading Room  
Washington State University, Tri-Cities  
Consolidated Information Center, Room 101-L  
2770 University Drive  
Richland, WA 99352  
Attn: Janice Parthree (509) 375-7443  
Map: <http://bit.ly/1LpZKUa>

##### Ecology Nuclear Waste Program Resource Center

3100 Port of Benton Blvd. Richland, WA 99354  
Attn: Teresa Booth 509-372-7950  
Online: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/commentperiods.htm>

##### Seattle

University of Washington  
Suzzallo Library  
4000 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE  
Seattle, WA 98195  
Attn: Hilary Reinert (206) 543-5597  
Map: <http://bit.ly/1QMtUog>

##### Spokane

Gonzaga University  
Foley Center Library  
East 502 Boone Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99258  
Attn: John Spencer (509) 313-6110  
Map: <http://bit.ly/1Cp0mRT>

##### Administrative Record

2440 Stevens Center Place, Room 1101  
Attn: Heather Childers (509) 376-2530  
Online: <http://pdw.hanford.gov/arpir/>

##### Hanford Events Calendar:

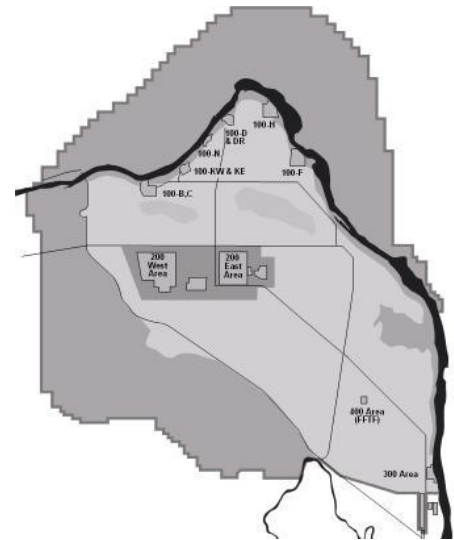
<http://www.hanford.gov/pageAction.cfm/calendar>

##### Hanford Public Comment Opportunities:

<http://www.hanford.gov/page.cfm/Outreach/PublicCommentOpportunities>

# Hanford Public Involvement Opportunity

We want to hear from you on the  
proposed modification for the Hanford  
Sitewide Permit!



**Comment Period: November 27, 2017 – January 31, 2018**  
**Public Meeting: December 13, 2017, 5:30 p.m.,**  
**Richland Public Library**