



DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY HANFORD

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**RICHLAND
OPERATIONS OFFICE**
United States Department of Energy



Workers Finish Cleaning Up High-Hazard Waste Site near Richland

RICHLAND, Wash. – Workers have completed cleanup activities at one of the nation's most contaminated waste sites located at the Hanford Site. Workers with Department of Energy (DOE) contractor CH2M HILL Plateau Remediation Company (CHPRC) are filling in an area that once contained some of the most hazardous waste at the 580-square-mile site in southeast Washington state.

Recent sampling results from the 618-10 Burial Ground and two nearby waste sites, after contaminated material was safely retrieved, confirmed the eight years of cleanup work is now complete.

During cleanup, workers retrieved 2,201 55-gallon drums, miscellaneous debris, and 94 Vertical Pipe Units that were buried more than 20 feet below ground. In total, workers removed more than 512,000 tons of contaminated soil and waste debris, which was taken to Hanford's engineered, hazardous-waste landfill, called the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility.

“This announcement is one more step in the progress we are making to clean up the legacy of plutonium production along the Columbia River at Hanford,” said Doug Shoop, manager of the DOE Richland Operations Office. “I’m proud of the workers for safely completing this very complex and high-hazard work, which contributes to the protection of people living in this region and the environment.”

The 7.5-acre burial ground received highly radioactive waste from Hanford laboratories and fuel development facilities in the 1950s and 1960s. Poor recordkeeping at the time meant many of the waste types were unknown, requiring additional sampling, worker training, and the development of new waste retrieval methods to safely remove the material.

“Faced with the challenge of remediating one of Hanford’s most radioactive burial grounds, our team of workers, always focused on safety, implemented new technologies that are now being shared with other projects across the nation,” said Tammy Hobbes, CH2M vice president of the 618-10 Project.

Workers have already started to remove infrastructure associated with the cleanup work, and demobilization will continue through 2018. The area will be graded to a natural contour and native vegetation will be planted in the winter of 2018 (November 2018 – February 2019) to help restore the site to a natural state. Seeds from native plants found in the area are being cultivated for next year’s planting.

The Department of Energy (DOE) is responsible for the federal government’s cleanup of the legacy of more than 40 years of plutonium production at the Hanford Site near Richland, Wash. Except for a tank waste mission managed by the DOE Office of River Protection, the DOE Richland Operations Office is responsible for all remaining Hanford cleanup and is currently focused on cleaning out and demolishing the high-hazard Plutonium Finishing Plant, excavating and disposing of contaminated soil and waste, treating contaminated groundwater, moving radioactive sludge out of the K West Basin and away from the Columbia River, and configuring Hanford Site infrastructure for the future. The office oversees Hanford Site work that is conducted by a federal and contractor workforce of approximately 4,000 personnel. Visit www.hanford.gov.

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