

# THE HANFORD SITE

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## **Hanford Site Makes History; DOE-EM '2022 Year in Review' Highlights Progress Nationwide**

**RICHLAND, Wash.** – Today, the Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management ([EM](#)) announced its *2022 Year in Review*, highlighted by the historic cleanup steps taken at the [Hanford Site](#).

Topping the list of Hanford achievements, workers began the first large-scale treatment of radioactive waste from large underground storage tanks, one of [EM's 2022 priorities](#).

"For the first time in our site's history, we are treating a significant amount of tank waste on an industrial scale in our cesium removal system," according to Brian Vance, manager of the Office of River Protection and Richland Operations Office. "This is an exciting new era in our cleanup mission as we prepare for 24/7 operations to treat waste from our large underground tanks through the Direct-Feed Low-Activity Waste Program."

The newly operational Tank-Side Cesium Removal System removes radioactive cesium and solids from tank waste. Under the Direct-Feed Low-Activity Waste Program, the treated waste will be fed directly to the nearby Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant for immobilization in glass when the plant comes online.

Throughout the year, crews at the plant continued commissioning and building operator proficiency on major systems that will immobilize tank waste in glass in two large melters in the plant's Low-Activity Waste Facility. Crews initiated heatup of the first melter in late 2022.

"In addition, our team continued to deliver taxpayer value in 2022 by safely progressing projects and conducting operations that reduce risks to our workforce, our community, and the environment of the Pacific Northwest," Vance added. "Given the exceptional accomplishments over the last few years, and especially this last year, I am very optimistic about our site's future."

The site also completed construction of a protective enclosure, or "cocoon," around K East Reactor, also an EM 2022 priority, and treated more than 2 billion gallons of contaminated groundwater for the eighth consecutive year.

The full document and a short Year in Review video are also available at [Year in Review | Department of Energy](#)

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*The Department of Energy (DOE) is engaged in one of the great public works of this century at the Hanford Site near Richland, Washington. Responsible for the federal government's cleanup of the legacy of more than 40 years of producing plutonium through the 1980s, DOE is transforming the*

site back into a 24/7 operations mode to treat tank waste from the production era. The DOE Office of River Protection (ORP) is responsible for the safe and efficient retrieval, treatment and disposal of the 56 million gallons of chemical and radioactive waste stored in Hanford's 177 underground tanks. The mission includes building and commissioning the world's largest radioactive waste treatment plant, which will immobilize the legacy tank waste through vitrification. The DOE Richland Operations Office is responsible for all remaining Hanford cleanup and is currently focused on stabilizing and demolishing former plutonium production structures, excavating and disposing of contaminated soil and waste, treating contaminated groundwater, and configuring Hanford Site infrastructure for the future, with an emphasis on supporting the tank waste mission. Hanford Site work is conducted by a federal and contractor workforce of approximately 10,000 personnel. Visit [www.hanford.gov](http://www.hanford.gov) for more information about the Hanford Site.



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