

# THE HANFORD SITE

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## Subcontractor Selected to Support Transfer of Radioactive Capsules to Dry Storage at Hanford

**RICHLAND, Wash.** – U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) contractor Central Plateau Cleanup Company (CPCCo) recently selected a subcontractor to continue work on the [Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility](#) (WESF) at the [Hanford Site](#) and install equipment needed to transfer nearly 2,000 highly radioactive capsules from a water-filled basin to [safer interim dry storage](#).

CPCCo is managing the project and has awarded a \$9.5 million construction subcontract to Apollo Mechanical Contractors Inc.

Apollo will have two tasks: complete the necessary structural and utility-related modifications to WESF and install the new cask storage system. These modifications will enable the safe transfer of the capsules from the basin to engineered stainless steel and concrete casks for dry storage.

Once filled, the casks will then be transported to a nearby capsule storage area. Transferring the capsules from the WESF basin to dry storage reduces the risk of a radioactive release in the unlikely event of loss of water from the basin.

“While the 1,936 cesium and strontium capsules are currently in safe storage, WESF is an aging facility,” said Gary Pyles, RL project manager. “Moving the capsules will enable the planned deactivation of WESF and will reduce the risk and significantly reduce the annual costs for storing the capsules.”

The project team has already made key progress over the past few months, [pouring the concrete foundation](#) for the new capsule storage area near WESF and completing construction of a full-scale mock-up that replicates WESF’s G Cell, canyon, and truck port through which the cesium and strontium capsules will be transferred. The mock-up allows workers to safely train, test equipment, and develop procedures before performing the work in a radiological environment.

“The award of this contract gets us another step closer to completing the project and enabling the safe transfer and packaging of the capsules,” said Bob Nichols, CPCCo inner area end states director. “My team looks forward to working with Apollo to continue to move this critical risk-reduction project forward.”

The capsule transfer project is expected to be completed by 2025.

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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 11,000 personnel. Visit [www.hanford.gov](http://www.hanford.gov) for more information about the Hanford Site.*



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