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DOE approves key safety document for Hanford plant

RICHLAND, Wash. — The U.S. Department of Energy's Office of River Protection (ORP) has approved a critical safety deliverable needed for the Hanford Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant (WTP), also known as the Vit Plant. The deliverable, known as a Documented Safety Analysis (DSA), identifies the potential hazards associated with treating low activity tank waste and the controls contractor Bechtel National Inc. (BNI) will use to address those hazards in order to protect workers, the public, and the environment. The DSA is a federal requirement that sets rules for safety controls at Department of Energy (DOE) nuclear facilities.

DOE is working to begin waste treatment activities using the [direct feed low activity waste \(DFLAW\)](#) approach in advance of the consent decree milestone of 2023. The DFLAW approach uses key facilities of the WTP, including the [Low Activity Waste \(LAW\) Facility](#). The DFLAW approach will enable treatment of low-activity waste in advance of completion of the entire WTP as was originally planned. Construction is largely complete for the WTP's Analytical Laboratory and a collection of more than 20 support facilities. In addition, some portions of the LAW Facility, the Laboratory, and support facilities are undergoing systems testing and startup activities.

Over the next few years, BNI will use the DSA in preparing to bring the LAW Facility online during what is known as hot commissioning. It will use the DSA to establish the safety programs, commissioning procedures, and training and maintenance plans needed to achieve hot commissioning.

"Having a complete and approved Documented Safety Analysis provides further confidence that the facility can safely treat low-activity radioactive tank waste while protecting workers, the public, and the environment," ORP Manager Brian Vance said. "This provides a benchmark for our safety oversight in preparing for hot commissioning of the LAW Facility."

The LAW Facility's DSA serves as the foundation for the design and safety controls needed to comply with DOE nuclear safety requirement. To prepare the DSA, a team of nuclear safety engineers participated in an extensive hazards analysis, identified and closed anticipated challenges, and established the controls for radioactive and hazardous materials. Then, ORP conducted an independent safety evaluation, which resulted in DOE's approval of the DSA.

"We remain on pace to move the Low-Activity Waste Facility from construction to startup this summer," said [Brian Reilly](#), a Bechtel senior vice president and BNI's director for the WTP Project. "The DSA will play an important part in training, qualifying, and preparing the workforce as we move towards hot commissioning."

About the Office of River Protection

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Hanford Site in southeast Washington state is home to 56 million gallons of chemical and radioactive waste stored in underground tanks – the result of more than four decades of plutonium production. The Office of River Protection (ORP) is responsible for the retrieval, treatment, and disposal of this waste in a safe, efficient manner. The River Protection Project is the largest and most complex environmental remediation project in the nation.

About Bechtel

Bechtel is designing and building the world's largest radioactive waste treatment plant for the U.S. Department of Energy at the Hanford Site in southeastern Washington state. The Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant, also known as the Vit Plant, will immobilize some of the chemical and radioactive waste stored in 177 underground tanks using a process called vitrification. Visit www.hanfordvitplant.com.

Watch video of the DSA approval and footage of Vance and Reilly's additional comments: https://youtu.be/w_lvFCKTq2M



Ben Harp, the U.S. Department of Energy Office of River Protection (ORP) deputy manager, signs a Safety Evaluation Report which recommended approval of the Hanford Low-Activity Waste vitrification facility Documented Safety Analysis. Looking on are Brian Reilly, a Bechtel senior vice president and Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant project director (left); Rob Hastings, ORP assistant manager for Technical and Regulatory Support; Brian Vance, ORP manager; and Alan Dobson, Bechtel National Inc. area manager for Nuclear Safety.



Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant (WTP) project contractor Bechtel National Inc. remains on pace to move the Low-Activity Waste Facility from the construction phase to the startup and testing phase this summer. The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of River Protection has approved a Documented Safety Analysis (DSA), that identifies the potential hazards associated with treating low activity tank waste and the controls that will be used to address those hazards in order to protect workers, the public, and the environment. The DSA is a federal requirement that sets rules for safety controls at DOE nuclear facilities.