

HANFORD COMMUNITIES

May 2025 Hanford News & Updates

The \$589 Billion Hanford Cleanup and 2086 Deadline Aren't Sustainable. *Here's What Needs to Change*

By Hanford Communities Staff May 2, 2025

\$589 Billion Hanford Cleanup and 2086 Deadline
Here's What Needs to Change

Hanford Cleanup Timeline Extended
DOE's 2025 Lifecycle Report estimates cleanup will now be projected through 2086, with costs reaching up to \$589.4 billion

Support for Grouting
Grouting the Low-Activity Waste as a complimentary method to vitrification.

Call for Smarter Cleanup Strategies
Hanford Communities urges a shift toward more cost-effective, science based solutions to speed up the process without compromising safety.

Regulator Support & Safety Record
The Holistic Negotiations Agreement to grout 22 tanks marks progress and opens the door to further collaboration among the Tri-Party agencies.

The Department of Energy's latest Hanford Lifecycle Report is out—and it pushes the projected cleanup completion date to 2086, with a price tag nearing \$600 billion.

But it's not all bad news.

This blog breaks down what's changed, what's working, and how smarter solutions like grouting could speed things up without cutting corners.

Click below to see why it's time to rethink how we tackle one of the world's most complex cleanups.

[Read on the Blog](#)

Eastern WA nuclear waste test that could save taxpayers billions called a success

By Annette Caryl May 1, 2025



As part of a demonstration project, 2,000 gallons of low-activity radioactive and hazardous chemical waste from Hanford's underground tanks were successfully pretreated, shipped offsite, and will be disposed of after being turned into grout. This project shows that grouting — a less expensive alternative to vitrification — could be a viable method for disposing of some of Hanford's 56 million gallons of waste.

The Department of Energy (DOE) and Washington state regulators see this as a significant step toward accelerating cleanup, reducing costs by billions, and improving tank safety. The waste, treated to remove most radioactivity, was transported in secure containers to facilities in Texas and Utah.

Despite some public concerns about transporting liquid waste, DOE has a long track record of safe shipments. This initiative supports future large-scale grouting, offering a path to faster and more cost-effective cleanup at the Hanford site.

[Read Full Article](#)

Hanford's Upgraded Evaporator Back in Service for Tank Waste Cleanup

By DOE EM Staff | April 29, 2025



After years offline, a critical facility supporting Hanford's tank waste cleanup is back in action. The 242-A Evaporator, essential for creating space in underground tanks by removing water from radioactive waste, has resumed operations following extensive repairs, system upgrades, and employee training.

The improvements not only boost safety and efficiency but also prepare the site for the next phase of waste treatment.

Why it matters: With enhanced capacity and newly trained crews, the evaporator's return marks a major step forward in Hanford's decades-long environmental cleanup.

[Read Full Article](#)

A Heavy Lift: How Crews Are Tackling Air Quality at Hanford

By DOE EM Staff | April 15, 2025



Replacing a home air filter is easy—but what about 72 high-efficiency filters in a 70-year-old plutonium plant? At Hanford's Plutonium Uranium Extraction (PUREX) facility, crews just completed this complex task to ensure safe ventilation as the site moves toward eventual demolition.

Outfitted in full protective gear, workers removed and safely disposed of filters weighing 65 pounds each, helping maintain critical air quality for workers and the environment.

Why it matters: This behind-the-scenes effort is key to keeping the aging facility stable and safe as Hanford cleanup efforts continue.

[Read Full Article](#)

Up to \$590 billion still needed to clean up toxic nuclear site near Columbia River in WA

By Annette Cary | April 15, 2025

The projected cost to finish environmental cleanup at the Hanford nuclear site has decreased by \$51 billion since the last estimate three years ago, thanks to a new agreement between the Department of Energy (DOE) and Washington State. The revised high-end estimate now sits at \$589 billion, down from \$640 billion in 2022.

The DOE's 2025 Hanford Lifecycle Scope, Schedule and Cost Report shows most cleanup wrapping up by 2086, with environmental monitoring and stewardship extending through 2100.

Key updates include:

- A plan to grout some of the least radioactive tank waste instead of glassifying all of it, which is faster and could save tens of billions.
- A streamlined process to treat high-level waste that bypasses Hanford's partially built Pretreatment Facility.
- Inflation and newly added work, like the eventual disposition of eight plutonium reactors, factored into both high and low range estimates.

Although the high-end estimate dropped, the low-end rose to \$364 billion due to added scope and inflation.

Total cleanup costs depend heavily on future federal funding levels—higher investments could shorten the timeline and reduce long-term expenses.

Public comment is open on the 2025 report for the next 60 days.

[Read Full Article](#)



Hanford Plant Enhances Training With Virtual Walkthroughs

The Hanford Site's Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant is taking computer-based training to the next level by creating virtual walkthroughs of plant facilities.

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Hanford Fire Department Trains With Waste Treatment Plant to Ensure Readiness

Hanford firefighters are training in emergency response with teams at the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant as the site gets ready to start treating radioactive waste from large, underground tanks.

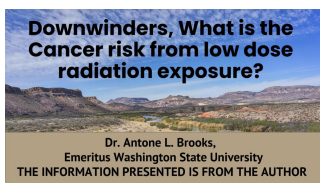
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Open Comment Periods

There are currently no open comments.

[What is a Public Comment](#)

Events from our Partners



May 12 | 7:00 PM
Richland Public Library

Join the [B Reactor Museum Association \(BRMA\)](#) for a

THE HANFORD SITE

May 7 | 5:30 PM
Richland Public Library

The U.S. Department of Energy Hanford Field Office and Washington State Department of Ecology are hosting a hybrid public meeting on May 7 at 5:30 p.m. at the Richland Public Library to share details about a proposed



May 21 | 5:30 PM
Facebook & YouTube

Join the next Let's Talk About Hanford livestream on May 21 at

compelling presentation by Dr. Antone Brooks, Emeritus Professor at Washington State University, as he explores the risks associated with low-dose radiation exposure—especially in the context of fallout from nuclear weapons testing and nuclear accidents like Fukushima.

Drawing from decades of research, including his leadership in the Department of Energy's Low Dose Radiation Research Program, Dr. Brooks challenges conventional models of radiation risk assessment, such as the Linear No-Threshold Hypothesis (LNT), and presents emerging evidence of adaptive, protective biological responses to low-dose radiation.

Learn how fear-driven policy and public perception can lead to costly consequences—from disrupted communities to missed medical opportunities—and why a re-evaluation of radiation safety standards is both scientifically and socially critical.

This free event will be held at the Richland Public Library, is open to all ages, and will begin at 7:00 PM. The presentation will also be recorded for those who cannot attend in person.

See Event

Contact-Handled Waste Processing Treatment and Storage Area at Hanford's Central Waste Complex.

The facility will handle, treat, and package various types of radioactive and mixed waste for shipment or disposal.

Ecology will outline the state's permitting role.

While no formal comments will be accepted at this meeting, a future comment period will be part of the permit process.

You may also participate virtually using Microsoft Teams by following these instructions:

Join on your computer or Teams mobile app
[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only)
509-931-1284 United States
833-633-0875 United States (Toll-free)
Phone Conference ID: 284 313 300#

Questions? Please contact Dana Cowley, Hanford Mission Integration Solutions at dana_c_gribble@rl.gov, or Daina McFadden, Washington State Department of Ecology, at Hanford@ecy.wa.gov.

Join the Meeting

5:30 p.m. PT to learn about the Hanford Site's Waste Treatment Plant and how millions of gallons of tank waste will be turned into glass.

Ecology's Suzanne Dahl, who has 30 years of experience with Hanford's tank waste, will lead the discussion, followed by a live Q&A session.

The event will stream on Zoom and Facebook Live. Recordings will be available afterward on Facebook and YouTube.

This ongoing series offers accessible conversations for anyone wanting to learn more about Hanford cleanup efforts.

Facebook Link

Watch Series

Hanford Communities | [Website](#)



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