

HANFORD COMMUNITIES

Hanford Cleanup & Community Updates

WA nuclear site makes history. Radioactive waste plant launches

By Annette Cary | October 15, 2025



After more than two decades of construction, the Hanford Waste Treatment Plant has achieved a historic milestone—successfully turning radioactive waste into stable glass for safe, long-term disposal. This breakthrough marks the first time waste from Hanford’s aging underground tanks has been vitrified, meeting a federal court deadline and advancing one of the nation’s most complex environmental cleanup efforts.

Washington leaders hailed the achievement as a major victory for the Tri-Cities community and the protection of the Columbia River. Read more about how this long-awaited milestone was reached and what comes next for Hanford’s cleanup efforts below.

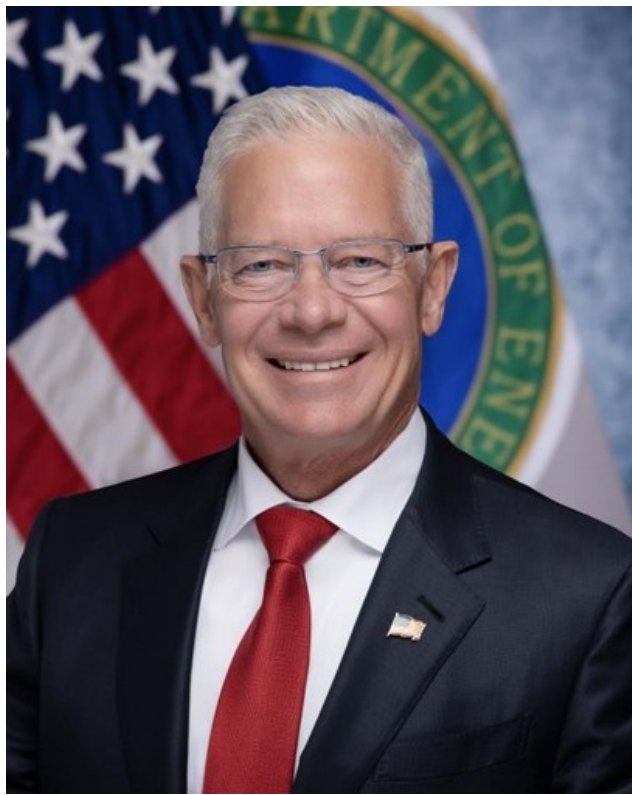
[Read the Full Blog](#)

EM-1 Tim Walsh Confirmed

On October 7, the Senate confirmed Timothy John Walsh of Colorado as Assistant Secretary (EM-1) of the Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management — the first Senate-confirmed leader in this role in more than six years.

In his first message to the EM team, Assistant Secretary Walsh emphasized his commitment to both remediating environmental legacies and transforming EM sites into opportunities for innovation, energy production, and advanced manufacturing.

Drawing on his background in military leadership and complex project delivery, Walsh aims to guide EM into a new era of progress and transformation.



Historic achievement: Governor Ferguson, Ecology celebrate nuclear waste officially being turned into glass at Hanford Site

By Department of Ecology | October 15, 2025

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DOE: Hanford vit plant is operational

By Ty Beaver | October 15,
2025

[Read the Article](#)



Update: WA, NW leaders react to 'historic achievement decades in the making' at Hanford site

By Tri-City Herald Staff | October 15, 2025

Washington and Oregon leaders are celebrating the long-awaited launch of Hanford's vitrification plant, which has officially begun turning radioactive waste into stable glass for safe disposal—a milestone decades in the making. Gov. Bob Ferguson called it “historic,” crediting the unified efforts of workers, businesses, and elected officials for holding the federal government accountable and ensuring the project's completion.

State, local, and federal leaders, including Sens. Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, Rep. Dan Newhouse, and Hanford contractors, praised the achievement as a critical step in protecting the Columbia River, nearby communities, and future generations. Read more about the reactions to this historic moment and what it means for the Hanford cleanup below.

[Read the Article](#)



History-making: After decades of building and planning, Hanford vitrifies first tank waste

By Northwest Public Broadcasting | Anna King October 15, 2025

For the first time ever, Hanford workers have successfully turned radioactive waste into glass, marking the official start of vitrification after decades of preparation. Despite a federal shutdown, the key legal deadline set forth in the Tri-Party Agreement was achieved marking a major cleanup milestone.

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