

D11. HANFORD TANK-WASTE STRATEGY PROPOSED

On April 10, DOE and the Washington State Department of Ecology issued a draft environmental impact statement for cleaning up high-level nuclear waste stored in aging tanks at the Hanford Site. The draft document proposes strategies for dealing with one of the most complex environment risks in the former nuclear weapons complex.

This draft for Hanford's Tank Waste Remediation System explores nine alternatives for disposing of 56 million gallons of radioactive and hazardous waste in 177 underground tanks, plus the remediation of 60 inactive tanks. It also identifies four alternatives for managing and disposing of cesium and strontium capsules in the Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility. The preferred alternative for the tank waste is called Phased Implementation, which would carry out a program outlined in the Tri-Party Agreement - a pact signed by DOE, the state and the Environmental Protection Agency to govern cleanup of the site.

Phased implementation will enable DOE to treat the highly radioactive tank waste and remain flexible enough to change systems as new technologies are developed or new information is revealed.

For more, "Hanford Tank-Waste Strategy Proposed," Nuclear News, pg. 7, May 1996.