

# High-Level Waste Vitrification Facility

## Waste Treatment Plant Permit Modification



Figure 1. Columbia River looking at the Hanford Site

### AT A GLANCE

Comments accepted Aug. 27 12:00am – Oct. 13, 2025 11:59pm

This Agency-initiated permit modification incorporates the initial design for the Direct-Feed Low Activity Waste (DFLAW) configuration of the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant (WTP) High-Level Waste (HLW) Facility.

### Public comment invited

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) is proposing a change to the Hanford Facility Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Permit, Revision 8C.

This change affects the Dangerous Waste Portion for the Treatment, Storage, and Disposal of Dangerous Waste for the WTP Operating Unit Group 10.

The permittees are:

U.S. Department of Energy  
Hanford Field Office  
P.O. Box 550  
Richland, WA 99352

Bechtel National, Inc.  
450 Hills Street  
Richland, WA 99354

### Background

The Hanford Site occupies 580 square miles in southeastern Washington State. The site produced plutonium for the nation's defense program from 1943 to the late 1980s. Today, waste management and environmental cleanup are the primary missions at Hanford.



Figure 2 HLW Facility 2023

## Overview & Changes

This draft permit modification includes the initial information describing the new configuration relative to the WTP HLW Facility. It also allows future submittal of permit affecting engineering documents and information as facility design and operational planning progresses. The draft permit modification includes certain updates to other WTP HLW Facility critical system design information.

The draft permit modification will align the permit with the recently finalized *Sixth Amended Consent Decree Between U.S. Department of Energy and State of Washington (Case 2:08-cv-5085-RMP (E.D. WA January 8, 2025))* that allows for the direct transfer of tank waste to the WTP HLW facility without pretreatment.

This permit modification includes text revisions, table revisions, figure updates, design document updates, and interim compliance schedule updates.

The following documents are included in the permit modification for public review:

- Unit-Specific Permit Conditions
- Chapter 1 – “Part A Form”
- Chapter 4 – “Process Information”
- Chapter 4A – “Figures and Drawings”
- Chapter 4F – “ High-Level Waste (HLW) Vitrification Facility”
- Appendix 1.1 – *WTP Facility Interim Compliance Schedule*
- Appendix 1.2 – *WTP Interim Compliance Schedule WTP Pretreatment Facility*
- Appendix 1.5 – *WTP Interim Compliance Schedule WTP High-Level Waste Facility*
- Appendix 10.1 – *HLW Building Process Flow Diagrams*

## Facility Background

Located east of Hanford’s 200 East Area, WTP is under construction. It will treat the 56 million gallons of waste in Hanford’s 177 underground tanks to convert it to a stable glass form in a process called vitrification.

The HLW facility will vitrify the high-level waste from the underground tanks.

The WTP unit is using a phased approach to permitting. The first phase, completed in 2002, issued a final Dangerous Waste Permit allowing construction of the facilities to start. This draft permit modification is part of the second phase that requires the Permittees to submit design and other information for Ecology approval before regulated portions of the WTP Unit are constructed.



Figure 3 HLW Facility 2019

## Reviewing the proposed changes

Ecology invites you to review and comment on this proposed WTP HLW permit modification. See the last page for comment period dates and information on how to submit comments.

Copies of the application for the proposed permit, the draft permit and fact sheet, and supporting documentation will be available during the public comment period online at [Ecology's website](#)<sup>1</sup>. The documents will also be available electronically at the [Hanford Public Information Repositories](#)<sup>2</sup>.

Ecology will consider and respond to all significant comments received during the public comment period. We will document our responses and issue a response to comments document when we make our final permitting decision.

For information on other comment periods or ways to get involved, go to [ecology.wa.gov/Hanford](https://ecology.wa.gov/Hanford) and click "Public comment periods" on the left bar or visit [Hanford.gov](https://hanford.gov) "public involvement opportunities".

You can also follow us on social media.



@EcologyWAHanford



## Language services

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/waste-toxics/nuclear-waste/public-involvement>

<sup>2</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/2505008ml.pdf>



Nuclear Waste Program  
3100 Port of Benton Blvd  
Richland WA 99354

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Electronic submission (preferred):

<https://nw.ecology.commentinput.com?id=f8SPEi9gk>

A public hearing is not scheduled, but if there is enough interest, we will consider holding one.

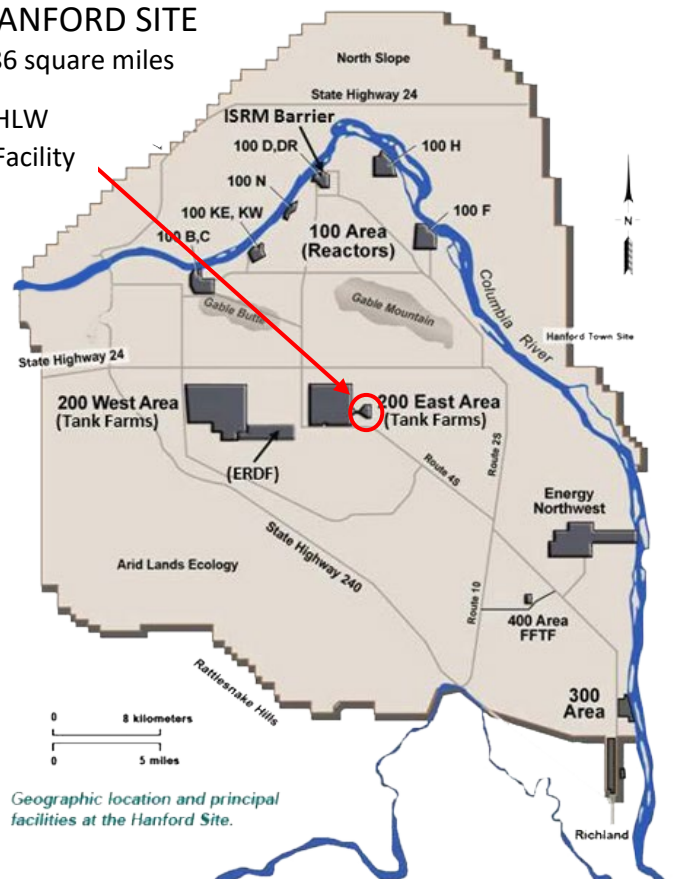
To request a hearing, mail or hand-deliver comments, or for more information, contact:

Daina McFadden  
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3100 Port of Benton Blvd  
Richland, WA 99354  
[Hanford@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:Hanford@ecy.wa.gov)

## HANFORD SITE

586 square miles

HLW Facility



Geographic location and principal facilities at the Hanford Site.

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 509-372-7950 or email at [Daina.McFadden@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:Daina.McFadden@ecy.wa.gov), or visit [ecology.wa.gov/Accessibility](https://ecology.wa.gov/Accessibility). For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341.