

Roles in Hanford waste transportation



U.S. Department of Energy (Energy) manages the cleanup of the Hanford Site. The Department of Ecology (Ecology) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulate this cleanup. As part of legal agreements, some waste is treated and disposed of onsite, while other waste is treated for offsite disposal.

What is being shipped?

There are several projects that will involve the offsite transportation and permanent disposal of waste.

- Transuranic and transuranic mixed waste (TRU/M): Tools, rags, protective clothing, debris, and other materials contaminated with radioactive elements, mostly plutonium.
- Tank waste: Pretreated low-activity waste from 22 tanks in Hanford's 200 West Area.
- Vitrification byproduct: A secondary liquid mixed waste generated in the glass-making process.

Where is it going?

- TRU/M waste will be shipped to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant* near Carlsbad, New Mexico.
- Pretreated low-activity tank waste and the vitrification byproduct will be grouted, solidified in cement, for offsite disposal at permitted commercial disposal facilities in Utah and Texas.

Why can't it stay at Hanford?

- TRU/M waste can only be disposed of in a deep geological repository.
- Hanford's geology is not suitable for disposal of grouted tank waste and some grouted byproduct waste from the vitrification process.

*<https://www.wipp.energy.gov/>

To request an ADA accommodation, email Daina.McFadden@ecy.wa.gov, call 509-372-7950, or dial 711 to call through the Washington Telecommunications Relay for services like text telephone (TTY). Visit [Ecology.wa.gov/ADA](https://ecology.wa.gov/ADA) for more accessibility information.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Energy

- Responsible for Hanford cleanup including the treatment, shipment, and disposal of waste.
- Decision-maker on waste treatment location and transportation to those locations.
- Sets procedures for transport of waste.

Ecology

- Does not have a direct role in regulating offsite transportation of hazardous materials.
- Requires Energy to maintain waste shipping manifests and to report discrepancies and incidents.
- Regulates waste management in Washington.
- Ensures the waste is appropriately treated and disposed of at a permitted facilities.
- Responds to hazardous waste spills in state.

U.S. Department of Transportation

- Determines regulations and procedures for hazardous material shipments.

Washington State Patrol

- Conducts oversight of commercial vehicles used for hazardous material shipments.

Other Agencies

- Washington State Department of Health will inspect radioactive materials shipped offsite.
 - Responds to transportation incidents involving radioactive materials.
- Within Washington State, other entities include both state and local agencies involved in emergency response.
- Agencies in other states have similar roles and responsibilities as the Washington State agencies above when waste is shipped through their state.