

APR 02 1995

PUBLIC HEARING

The Washington State Department of Ecology invites your comment on a draft state waste discharge permit that Ecology proposes to issue to the U.S. Department of Energy. The permit would regulate the discharge to the soil of treated wastewater from seven existing facilities in the Hanford Site's 200 East and West Areas. The discharge site is located about 25 miles northwest of Richland.

A public hearing will be held:

April 5, 1995, 7-9 p.m.
Department of Ecology,
1315 W. 4th Avenue,
(southeast corner of 4th & Olympia)
Kennewick, WA

A 32-day public comment period began March 6, 1995, and will end April 6, 1995. The permit application and related information are available for reading and copying in the Hanford Information Repository at the Washington State University, 100 Sprout Road, Room 130 West, Richland, WA, (509) 376-8583.

If you have special accommodation needs, please contact:

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(360) 407-7126
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(telecommunications device for the deaf).



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New Hanford tank seriously damaged while being tested

By the Herald staff

A new waste tank at Hanford was seriously damaged during testing last week.

The 100,000-gallon tank at the Effluent Treatment Facility had just been built and was being tested by the contractor when the accident happened.

The tank was full of a nonhazardous test liquid when a valve at its bottom was opened. However, there was no vent opened at the top. That created a vacuum that caused the top third of the tank to buckle in, according to a Westinghouse Hanford Co. press release.

The stainless steel tank is about 30 feet tall and about 26 feet in diameter.

There were no injuries and no releases to the environment when the accident occurred, at about 9 p.m. March 20.

The contractor — ADTECHS — is responsible for all damage, said Judy Graybeal, a Westinghouse Hanford spokeswoman. The testing that caused the damage was required before the tank would be accepted by Westinghouse.

The tank is to be part of a system designed to reduce the volume of waste in Hanford's 177 notorious hazardous waste tanks. So far, 68 of the oldersingle-shell tanks have leaked. None of the double-shell tanks has leaked.

Engineers now are evaporating water out of some of the 28 double-shell tanks to make room for waste from the 149 single-shell tanks.

The evaporated water has been condensed and put into holding basins. "great big bladders in the ground," Graybeal said.

When the facility is completed, the slightly radioactive condensed water will go into the surge tank — the one damaged last week — and then into a processing facility, where most of the contamination will be removed chemically or by filtration, she said.

The treated water will be deposited in the ground at an approved disposal site designed to limit its movement until radioactivity is reduced naturally, she said.

Westinghouse didn't know the cost of the damage nor whether it will delay the scheduled opening of the Effluent Treatment Facility later this year.

