

# Press Release

Washington Department of Ecology  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
U.S. Department of Energy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 13, 1989



## HANFORD CLEANUP AGREEMENT PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD, WORKSHOPS ANNOUNCED

The proposed state-federal agreement to clean up wastes at the Hanford Site will be discussed at four public workshops during a public comment period beginning Monday, March 13.

"This will be one of the most complex cleanup activities ever undertaken involving federal and state government," said Michael Lawrence, Richland Operations Office manager for the U.S. Department of Energy. "Public understanding and input to this effort is very important."

The draft agreement sets up a 30-year program to clean up an estimated five billion cubic yards of chemical and radioactive wastes that have accumulated over the past 45 years at the U.S. Department of Energy facility.

The agreement between DOE, the State of Washington and the Environmental Protection Agency prescribes detailed milestones by which various cleanup efforts will be completed. Estimated cost is \$2.8 billion for the first five years. In addition, the state will receive federal funds to pay for overseeing the program.

The public will have until April 28 to comment on the documents, which include:

- o A Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order, which describes the roles, responsibilities and authorities of the three agencies in the cleanup and permitting process. It also sets up dispute resolution processes and describes how the agreement can be enforced.
- o An Action Plan to implement the cleanup and permitting efforts. The plan includes major milestones for initiating and completing specific work and procedures the three agencies will follow.
- o A Community Relations Plan, which describes how the public will be informed and involved in the cleanup and permitting process. It describes public meeting plans, proposed publications and public comment opportunities.
- o A Cooperative Funding Agreement, which provides funding to the state for oversight expenses.

"We expect and encourage the involvement of the public in this agreement," said Chris Gregoire, director of the Washington Department of Ecology. "We think we have a good agreement here but we are certainly open to public suggestions as to how we can improve it."

EPA Regional Administrator Robie Russell said the agreement means that both EPA and Ecology strengthen their regulatory authority over the cleanup and waste management activities at Hanford. "We are confident we will be able to make sure the cleanup efforts move forward timely, safely and efficiently."

Workshops are planned for March 23 at the Hanford House, 802 George Washington Way in Richland; March 27 at Cavanaugh's Inn at the Park, W. 303 N. River Drive in Spokane; March 28 at the Seattle Center, Northwest Rooms, the Shaw Room, in Seattle; and March 29 at the Shilo Inn, 401 E. 13th Street (East Mill Plain exit from I-5) in Vancouver.

The workshops will feature a general meeting at 7 p.m. A technical question-and-answer session will be held at 1 p.m.

Persons wishing copies of the documents, a citizens guide to the Agreement or fact sheets may obtain them by contacting:

Jerry Gilliland, Washington Department of Ecology, (206) 459-6674

Ken Morgan, U.S. Department of Energy, (509) 376-7501

Claire Rowlett, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, (206) 442-1099

The documents also are available for public review at the University of Washington Library, Seattle; Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Sixth Avenue, Seattle; Spokane Public Library, Spokane; Department of Energy Reading Room, Richland; and Portland State University Library, Portland.

# # #

Media Contacts:

Jerry Gilliland, Washington Department of Ecology, (206) 459-6674

Ken Morgan, U.S. Department of Energy, (509) 376-7501

Claire Rowlett, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, (206) 442-1099