



**TRI-PARTY  
AGREEMENT  
AGENCIES**

- **U.S.  
Department  
Of  
Energy**
- **Washington  
State  
Department of  
Ecology**
- **U.S.  
Environmental  
Protection  
Agency**

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# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) About Hanford Public Involvement

NOVEMBER 2011

## What's Required for Public Involvement at Hanford?

Legal requirements for public involvement at Hanford are identified in Section 10 of the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA). The TPA requires that:

- Information will be readily available to the public. This is accomplished, in part, by establishing public information repositories and providing access to either electronic or hard copies of documents found in the Administrative Record.
- The TPA agencies will maintain the Hanford Site postal mailing list and Hanford electronic mailing list. The

TPA agencies will periodically distribute information through these mailing lists.

- A community relations plan will be issued for the Hanford Site. This is required under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and also satisfies requirements under the Resource, Conservation, and Recovery Act (RCRA). The Hanford Public Involvement Plan fulfills these requirements.

Regarding public meetings, the TPA also states that:

- At least one public meeting will be held in the spring to discuss the impact of budget decisions and take public comment and questions on cleanup priorities.
- Additional public meetings on other Hanford decision documents will be scheduled on an as-needed basis. The TPA agencies will consider scheduling public meetings in situations involving complex issues or a high level of public interest.

## What is the Hanford Public Involvement Plan?

The Hanford Public Involvement Plan, referred to as "the Plan" for short, helps identify how the public can become involved in the Hanford cleanup decision-making process. It also describes how the TPA agencies

consider public input while determining when and where public meetings will be held. The Plan was first issued in 1990 and has been revised several times since then. Changes are necessary when the material in the Plan

becomes dated and as Hanford cleanup progresses. The Plan serves as the overall guidance document for public participation and outreach activities at Hanford.



*Public input can influence Hanford cleanup decisions*

## What is “Public Comment”?

“Public Comment” refers to input provided by members of the public on documents issued by the TPA agencies. Input can be in the form of oral comments provided at public meetings or written comments submitted by mail or email.

A formal public comment period is required for certain TPA documents.

These documents include:

- Significant Changes to the TPA
- CERCLA Feasibility Studies/ Proposed Plans
- Interim Response Actions and Interim Measures
- RCRA Hanford Site Permit

Sometimes the TPA agencies ask for informal public input on Hanford programs and activities that are not specifically related to a cleanup decision. This input may be used to improve document clarity or determine a need for additional outreach activities on a specific topic.



*Responses to public comment are provided in Responsiveness Summaries and Comment and Response Documents.*

## How are public comments used?

All public comments received on a CERCLA action or Hanford Site Permit action are considered before finalizing a cleanup decision. CERCLA decisions (referred to as a Record of Decision) include a **Responsiveness Summary** that summarizes public comments received

on a proposed cleanup plan and provides the TPA agencies’ responses. It also identifies where public comments influenced change in the proposed cleanup and explains why the final cleanup decision was selected.

Public comments received on other decisions, such as

on significant changes to the TPA or on Hanford Site Permit actions, will be addressed in a **Comment and Response** document. These documents are available to the public through Hanford’s Administrative Record (see page 3).

## What does “as-needed basis” mean?

The TPA states that additional public meetings on Hanford decision documents will be scheduled on an as-needed basis. This “as-needed basis” is assessed through interactions between the TPA agencies and stakeholders,

interested members of the public, the Hanford Advisory Board, and the State of Oregon. Input received through consultations with tribal governments is also considered.

Interactions between TPA agencies and the public can

be in the form of conference calls, webinars, workshops, or other types of communication. To find out more about when these activities take place, please join the Hanford email list (page 4).

## How are people notified of upcoming public meetings/hearings?

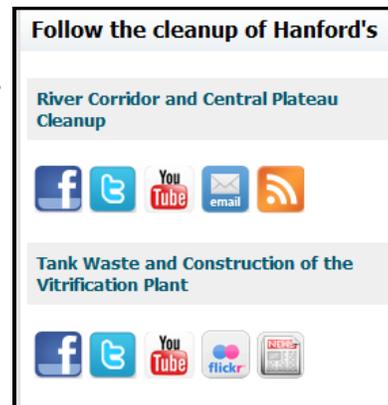
When it comes to notifying the public of upcoming public meetings and hearings, there are some actions required by the TPA. The TPA states that:

- Public meetings will be announced by means of a public notice in a newspaper of regional circulation. Notice will also be provided through the Hanford mailing list 2-3 weeks prior to the public meeting.
- Public hearings will be announced at least 30 days prior to the hearing.
- A public notice of availability of documents out for public comment will be published in a regional newspaper.
- Copies of all public comments received and the agencies' responses to comments will become part of the Administrative Record.

The TPA agencies use other methods to notify the public.

This includes the use of social media such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube videos, and online calendars.

Check out [www.hanford.gov](http://www.hanford.gov) and look for these icons to follow Hanford cleanup.



## How do I request a public meeting or hearing?

A member of the public may request a public meeting on a CERCLA action or a public hearing on a Hanford Site permit action. Please note that a request for a public hearing must be submitted in writing.

Points of contact are identified on information distributed for the specific action. However, standing

ways to request a meeting are by phone or email at:

**Hanford Cleanup Line:**

1-800-321-2008

**Email:**

[Hanford@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:Hanford@ecy.wa.gov)

**Photo: Public workshop on Hanford's radioactive solid waste burial grounds.**



*A public hearing usually deals with a RCRA action while public meetings usually deal with CERCLA actions.*

## How can I access Hanford documents?

Hanford documents are electronically available on the Administrative Record (AR) website. The AR consists of important documents that are used when making cleanup decisions. You can access the AR at

<http://www2.hanford.gov/arpir/>.

Files on the AR are sorted by

categories such as author, document number, and operable unit to make it easier to find a specific document. Files are also electronically accessible at public information repositories.

Hard copies of documents out for public comment will be placed in the public information

repositories (PIR). PIRs are located in Richland, Seattle, Spokane, and Portland. Address and contact information are available on the mentioned website.



**Need help finding a document?  
Contact the Hanford Cleanup line or email.**

# Hanford Public Involvement and Outreach

Public meetings are only one way the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies interact with the public. The TPA agencies work collaboratively and individually to provide other types of public involvement and outreach activities. Examples of these activities are classroom visits and Hanford-related student projects; presentations to community groups; Hanford Communities videos; exhibits at local and regional events (fairs, expos, etc.); the Hanford Speakers Bureau; agency and stakeholder updates and newsletters; and use of social media tools.



To learn more about Hanford, join the Hanford mailing list or the electronic listserv. The TPA agencies use these lists to send out information on upcoming public involvement opportunities and to provide updates on Hanford activities. You can join

the Hanford email list by visiting <http://listserv.wa.gov> or by contacting the Hanford Cleanup Line or email (page 3). Information on upcoming events is also available on the following online calendars:

**Hanford Events Calendar:**  
[www.hanford.gov/pageaction.cfm/calendar](http://www.hanford.gov/pageaction.cfm/calendar)

**TPA Public Involvement Calendar:**  
[www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/public.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/public.htm)

