

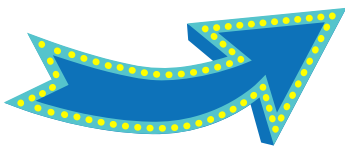


Hanford Cleanup Budget

U.S. Dept. of Energy Fiscal Year 2023
Budget Request Comment Period

COMMENT DEADLINE: SUN. AUG 15, 2021

WHAT?



The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is gathering your comments on its fiscal year 2023 Budget Request. DOE is required to submit a compliant budget that keeps cleanup on track, but the budget changes as it goes up the chain of command to the President. Your comments can help put a spotlight on why it is important that the cleanup is fully funded, and communicate your cleanup priorities.

BACKGROUND

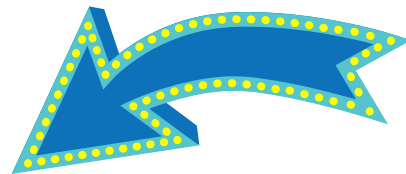
The Hanford Site budget process is complicated. There are always three years of budget in play at one time. The current year, the following year, and the year after that. So this year, 2021, the Hanford site local managers for the U.S. Department of Energy, that run the Richland Operations and Office of River Protection cleanup are working on their budget requests for fiscal year 2023. Hanford's fiscal year goes from Oct. 1st to Sept. 30th.

Certain parts of the budget process are hidden from public view. Since 2013 more and more of the budget numbers have been embargoed so that you can't see them. This makes it really hard to provide meaningful comments on what the U.S. DOE local field office is planning to request. The lack of information also means you can't see how the field offices are prioritizing cleanup to know what would "fall off the cleanup plate" if the cleanup was not fully funded.

Read on to see Hanford Challenge's concerns and sample comments.



HANFORD CHALLENGE CONCERNS



In the past, the public, stakeholders, and regulators had a collaborative relationship with the U.S. Dept. of Energy field offices when it came time for budget submittals. It was well-known that for federal employees "the President's budget is our budget" even if they didn't like cuts that were made from their original submittal. While we are disheartened with the current lack of transparency we are hoping for a return to an era of collaboration to ensure that the case is made, loud and clear, from all fronts, that the cleanup must be fully funded in order to succeed.

SAMPLE COMMENTS

REQUEST A COMPLIANT CLEANUP BUDGET: Don't make cuts before they are made for you. Make the case for a fully-funded cleanup that meets legally mandated deadlines and ensures human and environmental protection. Prioritize funding for:

- **Tank Waste Vitrification:** Make glass safely. Prioritize work on Direct Feed Low Activity Waste to immobilize tank waste in glass.
- **324 Building Cleanup:** Accelerate cleanup of B-cell contamination and make sure waste is characterized appropriately to keep long-lived radionuclides out of Hanford's onsite landfill, the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility.
- **WESF Capsules to Dry Storage Sooner:** Increase funding to safely get the Waste Encapsulation Storage Facility (WESF) strontium and cesium capsules to dry storage. Ensure funding for testing the degradation of concrete storage pools following removal of capsules to allow this data to increase safety everywhere that concrete and radiation are interacting.
- **Hanford Waste Treated Onsite:** Restore onsite capacity for treating Hanford waste that is currently sent to Perma-Fix Northwest.
- **Worker Health and Safety:** Ensure funding for worker training and personal protective gear including supplied air for protection of toxic chemical vapors in Hanford's tank farms.

DELAY TANK CLOSURE: Don't spend resources on closure of Hanford tank farms.

INCREASE TRANSPARENCY: Open the field office budget submittal process and share field office budget planning details. These numbers provide the context needed to write meaningful comments.

Email comments to the U.S. Department of Energy Field Offices at
CleanupPriorities@rl.gov

This Say What? Guide is funded through a Public Participation Grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology. The content was reviewed for grant consistency, but is not necessarily endorsed by the agency.

REFERENCE LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION



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Cleanup Agency Documents

- [DOE Presentation about the Hanford Budget](#) from the July 15th Virtual Public Meeting
- [WA State Dept. of Ecology Presentation about the FY23 Hanford Budget](#)
- [U.S. Dept. of Energy Webpage](#) for this comment period

Public Interest and Stakeholder Resources

- [Hanford Challenge Sample Comments](#)
- [Hanford Challenge Formal Public Comments](#)
- [Waste Encapsulation Storage Facility Information and Video](#)
- [New Tanks NOW: OneClick Take Action Petition](#)
- [Hanford Advisory Board Budget Priority Advice #309](#) March 2021
- [Hanford Advisory Board Public Involvement in Budget Development Advice #302](#) Sept. 2019 (older, but still relevant points today)
- [2020 Oregon Department of Energy Budget Comments](#) (for FY22, but great points in here that you may find helpful. FY23 still in development.)

CC the regulators, Ecology and EPA when you email your comments:
[See Sample Comments for CC list](#)

Contact U.S. DOE at

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Contact Ecology

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Contact Hanford Challenge

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Do you have questions?

More info