



White Surveys Progress at Hanford as Achievements Kick-Start New Era in Mission

March 1, 2022



During a Feb. 23 tour of the Hanford Site, EM Senior Advisor William "Ike" White signs the base of a bracket that will securely hold an ion exchange column from the Tank-Side Cesium Removal System used to filter tank waste.

RICHLAND, Wash. – **EM** Senior Advisor William "Ike" White got a firsthand look at recent cleanup progress at the **Hanford Site** during a visit last week.

"I'm both impressed by and optimistic about the progress here at Hanford," White said. "The achievements already reached and those on the horizon are getting us closer to around-the-clock operations to treat tank waste."

The projects and facilities that White visited support the delivery of safe and efficient cleanup that reduces risks to the workforce, local

communities, the Columbia River and the environment of the Pacific Northwest.

White observed operations at the **Tank-Side Cesium Removal System** (TSCR), where as much as 7,000 gallons of tank waste a day is treated to remove radioactive cesium and solids. The treated waste is being staged in a large underground tank and will later be fed directly to the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant for **vitrification**, or immobilization in glass, when the plant comes online next year.

“It’s great to see TSCR in person,” White said. “This is a tremendous achievement. The progress we are making in treating tank waste is transforming the site and will benefit the entire EM Program.”

White also made a stop at the **Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility**, which provides underwater storage for nearly 2,000 highly radioactive capsules containing cesium and strontium. The radioactive materials were removed from tank waste in the 1970s to reduce the temperature of waste in tanks. Over the past several months, workers completed several modifications to remove the capsules from the water-filled basin and place them in dry storage casks. Workers then will move the casks to a concrete pad in a new storage area near the facility.

Other stops included Hanford’s **Tank Farms**; a groundwater pump-and-treat system demonstrating how 27 billion gallons of groundwater has been **treated** to date, removing 674 tons of radiological and chemical contaminants; Hanford’s **324 Building**, where workers are setting conditions to excavate contaminated soil below the building; and the K Reactors area, where workers are preparing to safely enclose, or “**cocoon**,” the K East Reactor and drain and demolish the K West Reactor spent fuel basin.

“The facilities we saw today are great examples of this new era of Hanford cleanup success,” White said. “These are all key parts in fulfilling Hanford’s mission to protect the environment.”