



The Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility is adjacent to B Plant in the 200 East Area of the Hanford Site.

The U.S. Department of Energy and contractor Central Plateau Cleanup Company are preparing to transfer 1,936 radioactive capsules from the Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility to safer dry storage.

Background

The Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility (WESF) provides safe and compliant underwater storage for 1,936 highly radioactive capsules containing the elements cesium and strontium. In the 1970s, cesium and strontium were removed from Hanford waste tanks to reduce the temperature of the waste inside the tanks. Both materials were placed in sealed sturdy, stainless steel capsules at WESF for safe storage and monitoring.

Mission

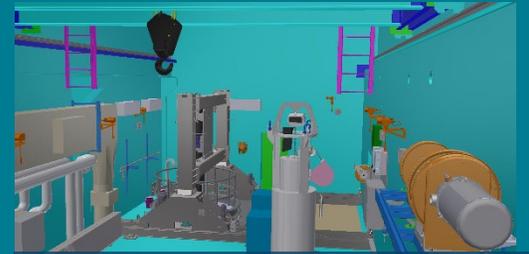
CPCCo is planning for transfer of the capsules to safer interim dry storage, allowing for the eventual deactivation of WESF.

While the capsules are currently in a safe configuration, WESF is an aging facility. Dry storage would eliminate the possibility of a release of radioactive material in the unlikely event of a loss of cooling water from the basin. Storing the capsules this way will also save more than \$6 million annually in operating costs.

In early 2021, CPCCo awarded a \$9.5 million construction subcontract to Apollo Mechanical Contractors Inc. to make the necessary structural and utility-related modifications to WESF and install the system needed to transfer the capsules to dry storage casks.

Future

Movement of the capsules to the dry storage area is expected to be completed in 2025.



Modifications were made to the operations gallery and G Cell within WESF to enable transfer of the capsules.



Workers recently finished construction on a dry storage area for the WESF capsules.



Aerial photo of the recently constructed Capsule Storage Area, bottom left, about a half-mile from the Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility, top right (adjacent to longer B Plant).



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