



Sample Public Comment – PUREX Storage Tunnels Permit Modification

[DATE]

Department of Ecology
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Dear Washington Department of Ecology,

The Department of Energy has committed to filling PUREX Tunnel Number 2 with grout in order to prevent a collapse that could result in the release of radioactive materials.

This proposed action has been characterized as “interim stabilization.” Since there is not a great inventory of the radioactive and chemical materials stored in the PUREX Tunnels, it is possible that the tunnels contain materials that qualify as high-level radioactive waste. If so, then certain legal requirements must be followed for appropriate disposal, which do not include permanently leaving such waste in a shallow land burial. Additionally, long-lived radionuclides such as plutonium could be buried in the tunnels in amounts that exceed the legal disposal limits at Hanford.

The agreed-upon remedy for the waste in the PUREX tunnels is removal, treatment, and disposal in licensed repositories and landfills. Therefore, it is of the highest importance that the State’s permit include a deadline requiring the federal government to remediate the grouted tunnel waste within a certain number of years. Washington State should add this waste removal requirement and deadline to the Tri-Party Agreement.

Thank you for considering my input and for holding public hearings on this permit modification.

[NAME]