

annulus between the primary and secondary tanks.

Because of the previous leaking single-shell tanks, mitigation actions have been in place at Hanford for decades. Active groundwater treatment systems operating in the B Complex area, where Tank B-109 is located, were installed several years ago to capture and treat contamination resulting from the discharge of approximately 52 million gallons of contaminated liquids to the soil surrounding the tank farm during historical operations, the DOE said.

The water table in the area ranges from 210 to 240 feet below Tank B-109. The DOE estimates that it could take more than 25 years for any contamination from the tank to reach the water table, and it would then be captured and removed by the pump and treat systems. The



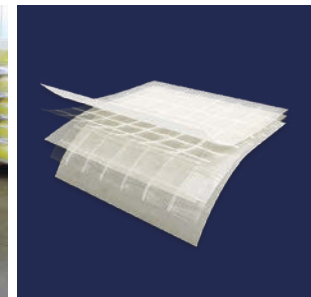
The B Complex area tank farm at the DOE's Hanford Site in Washington. (Photo: DOE)

DOE said it is continuing to assess and explore other capabilities to reduce the release of contaminants to the environment, such as surface barriers meant to prevent water from precipitation from intruding into the tank.

Waste Management continues



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