

*Try Something New!*

New Celebration 9:45am

**First Christian Church**  
1166 Oak • 344-1425

Traditional Service 11:00am

## New Hanford cleanup only two years away

*The K Basins cleanup is considered a top priority at the nuclear waste site*

*The Associated Press*

RICHLAND, Wash. — Contractors could begin moving 2,300 tons of spent nuclear fuel from pools of radioactive water to a storage site near the center of Hanford nuclear reservation by November 2000.

The U.S. Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency said Sept. 10 they had reached agreement on key dates for the K Basins cleanup project, which is considered a top priority at Hanford.

The K Basins are two indoor pools 400 yards from the Columbia River.

They are a big concern because the pools have leaked millions of gallons of radioactive water over the years, contaminating groundwater that flows into the river.

They are well past their design life as fuel cooling basins for the defunct K Reactors, and there are worries about earthquake safety.

Hanford's plan is to remove the fuel, process and package it and move it to a huge underground vault near the center of the 560-square-mile reservation.

Under the proposed deadlines, fuel removal would begin on Nov. 30, 2000, at K West Basin and a year later at K East Basin.

Fuel removal would be completed by Dec. 31, 2003, and cleanup of the basins would be finished by July 31, 2007.

Hanford's modern-day mission is cleanup of the accumulated radioactive and hazardous waste from four decades of plutonium production for the nation's nuclear arsenal.

The agreement also includes steps to improve contractor performance on the project, said Randy Smith, director of EPA's environmental cleanup office in Seattle.

Earlier this summer, the federal government approved a one-year contract extension for DE&S Hanford, a subsidiary of nuclear construction giant Duke Engineering of Charlotte, N.C. DE&S Hanford is working with Fluor Daniel Hanford Co. on the spent fuel project.

The project was reorganized this year because of technical delays and increasing costs.

Estimated project costs have gone from \$740 million in 1995 to \$1.4 billion, and now the completion date has been pushed back from the original target of 2001.

"There must be continued improvement in efficiency and effectiveness if the K Basin cleanup is to succeed," Smith said.

"Today's agreement does not solve all the problems, but it does provide a framework that gives Energy, EPA and the contractors a sharper focus on how to get the job done."

After a 45-day public comment period on the K Basins timetable and other parts of the agreement, final changes will be made if necessary and the plan will become part of the Tri-Party Agreement administered by DOE, EPA and the state Department of Ecology.

The K Basins project was not included in the 1989 Tri-Party agreement — the legal pact that is supposed to hold DOE to cleanup standards and timetables at Hanford.

When the three parties had difficulty reaching agreement on the K Basins project, a dispute resolution process was used to break the impasse.

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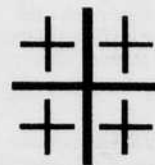
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- **Worship:** Central Lutheran Church (ELCA), 18th & Potter, Sundays, 8:15 & 10:45 a.m.  
Grace Lutheran Church (LC-MS), 18th & Hilyard, Sundays, 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.
- **Pastors:** John Reutter-Harrah, Ron Barth (Central, 345-0395)  
Phil Schoenherr (Grace, 342-4844)
- **Counseling available**

Back-to-School Campus Ministry Barbecue: Food, Live Band  
Sunday, Sept 27th, 6:00 - 8:00, 18th & University