WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Notification of Environmental Justice Assessment on

Agency Request Legislation to Revise ORP Site Surveillance Fee Structure

July 16, 2026

WHAT

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) is conducting an Environmental Justice Assessment on Agency Request Legislation to revise the fee models that fund the Office of Radiation Protection's (ORP) oversight of the Hanford commercial Low-Level Radioactive Waste (LLRW) facility.

The purpose of an environmental justice assessment is to identify:

- Who might be most impacted by an agency action
- Environmental benefits, harms, and health impacts of the action
- Ways to minimize or eliminate negative environmental impacts
- How to equitably distribute positive environmental impacts.

Visit our Environmental Justice webpage to learn more about Environmental Justice Assessments.

WHY

The current fee structure for the ORP Site Surveillance program is based on the volume of waste disposed at the LLRW site. The volume of waste has been declining steadily, and as a result, the ORP Site Surveillance program is experiencing an annual deficit of ~$775,000. DOH must continue full regulatory oversight as required to maintain Agreement State status required by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). The current volumetric fee model is no longer covers program costs, prompting the need for a change in statute (RCW 70A.388.060).

If the ORP Site Surveillance program is not able to cover its costs, possible environmental harms could include:

- Reduced inspection frequency.
- Delayed detection and immediate response to radiation/radioactive contamination leading to regulatory violations.
- Increased risk of radiation exposure for communities near transport routes or the disposal site.

WHO

The Hanford commercial LLRW facility will be required to pay fees under the new annual fee model for continuance of ORPs regulatory oversight activities. If the ORP Site Surveillance program is not able to cover its costs, surrounding communities may experience the harms described above.

Impacted groups may include:

- Low-income rural communities near Hanford.
- Tribal Nations with cultural and environmental ties to the region.
- Communities of color are disproportionately impacted by environmental harms.
- Licensee staff exposed to radiation and radioactive materials.
- Populations with limited access to health care or environmental information.

WHEN

The Department of Health is submitting this proposed legislation in Fall 2026 for consideration in the 2027 Washington State Legislative Session.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

For questions about this Environmental Justice Assessment, please contact Jill Wood at Jill.Wood@doh.wa.gov or John Martell at John.Martell@doh.wa.gov.

DOH 130-122 July 2026

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