

# Barbara LaMorticella

From a Concerned NW Citizen :

US nuclear production at Hanford has created 55 million gallons of high-level nuclear waste that is stored in underground tanks. It has released radiation into the diet of the Yakima people, who are heavy eaters of fish and harvester of plants grown in contaminated soil. More than half of the Yakima diet consists of 70 plant species harvested locally. Nuclear production at Hanford has released a timebomb: tanks that are leaking irrecoverable radiation into the soil and river. These will eventually affect all life along the Columbia. Just minutes of direct contact with contaminated soil is enough to trigger cancer. All of areas 100, 200 West and East and 300 on the Hanford site are contaminated need to be cleaned up.

To all appearances, the government has written the NW off as a sacrifice zone. Some waste will be stored onsite permanently.

The 324 building, 1000 feet from the river, is leaking underground. Tanks B-109 and T-111 are leaking. Liquid from B-209 will reach groundwater in 25 years, and will be radioactive for thousands of years.

The USDOE has a pattern of requesting less funding for Hanford Clean-Up than the federal government allocates, and the amount requested for clean-up grows smaller as the threat grows bigger. Meeting the clean-up milestones set forth in the Hanford Cleanup Agreement (TPA) would require \$4.56 billion in FY '25. But the USDOE is requesting only \$3.1 million. It is also requesting \$2.4 billion in new nuclear production and modernization, and \$500 million for "deployment and support of reactors." All waste from these "safe" reactors will then be shipped for storage to Hanford.

Liquid waste from Hanford will be shipped over highways through Spokane and Oregon, as will liquid to Hanford from distant reactors. This, though a functional vitrification plant is located right next to the site.

Legislators who make these decisions know nothing about the Northwest's earthquake prone geology, care little about the Columbia River and its importance to all living creatures in the NW, and know little about nuclear energy itself. At best their ignorance makes it possible, at worst it makes it simply expedient, to designate the Northwest as sacrifice zone.

Please do not let the USDOE do its own cost estimates of nuclear clean-up plans, and please realize it is an urgent necessity and moral responsibility to spend and do whatever necessary to ameliorate this threat to life in the Northwest.

Sincerely,  
Barbara LaMorticella