



March 9, 2021

[DOE official opens WM Symposia with 2021 EM priorities](#)

[Radwaste Solutions Staff](#)



William "Ike" White, the DOE's acting assistant secretary for Environmental Management. Source: DOE

William "Ike" White, the Department of Energy's acting assistant secretary for environmental management, helped open the [2021 Waste Management Symposia](#) by announcing a new era for the department's [Office of Environmental Management](#) (EM) and its cleanup mission. Speaking via live stream during the virtual meeting's plenary session on March 8, White said, "Today, EM is at the start of a new era, with a new administration and a new set of priorities for the year, and, hopefully, the start of a new post-pandemic world."

The new priorities that White touted are contained in EM's [Calendar Year 2021 Mission and Priorities](#), which outlines specific planned goals across the cleanup complex for the coming year. According to the DOE, the calendar serves as a marker for EM's continuing success in addressing the legacy of nuclear weapons production and government-sponsored nuclear energy research.

The goals: The calendar sets goals at EM sites, including:

- Completing the construction of the [Tank Side Cesium Removal \(TSCR\) system](#) at the [Hanford Site](#) in Washington state. TSCR is a pretreatment system critical to the site's Direct-Feed Low-Activity Waste approach to treating tank waste.
- Completing the processing of six million gallons of tank waste at the [Savannah River Site](#) in South Carolina, a goal made possible by the 2020 startup of the [Salt Waste Processing Facility](#).
- Transitioning from deactivation to demolition at [Building X-326](#), one of three former uranium enrichment process buildings at the [Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant](#) in Ohio.



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- Completing the demolition of the 1940s' era [Biology Complex at the Oak Ridge site](#) in Tennessee.
- Beginning the demolition of the [Main Plant Process Building](#) at the [West Valley Demonstration Project](#) in New York, the last major facility at the former commercial nuclear fuel reprocessing center.
- Completing the [demolition of all 18 DOE-owned buildings at the Energy Technology Engineering Center](#) in Ventura County, Calif.
- Awarding contracts that continue to enable safe and efficient cleanup progress across the EM enterprise.

New administration: During his plenary address, White said he was optimistic about the support that EM will receive from the new administration and Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, whose nomination was [approved by Congress](#) on February 25.

“I can assure you from the many conversations she and I have had in just over a week, she understands the importance of our cleanup mission, and she appreciates the department’s responsibility to deliver on our cleanup commitments,” he said.

White added that the new DOE leadership understands the vital role played by the communities that host and surround EM cleanup sites, and how EM can help ensure a strong future for those communities even after remediation is completed. “The cleanup progress we make doesn’t just support national security, energy, and research missions, it also helps us create opportunities for economic development, conservation, and recreation for the communities that all of us call home,” he said.