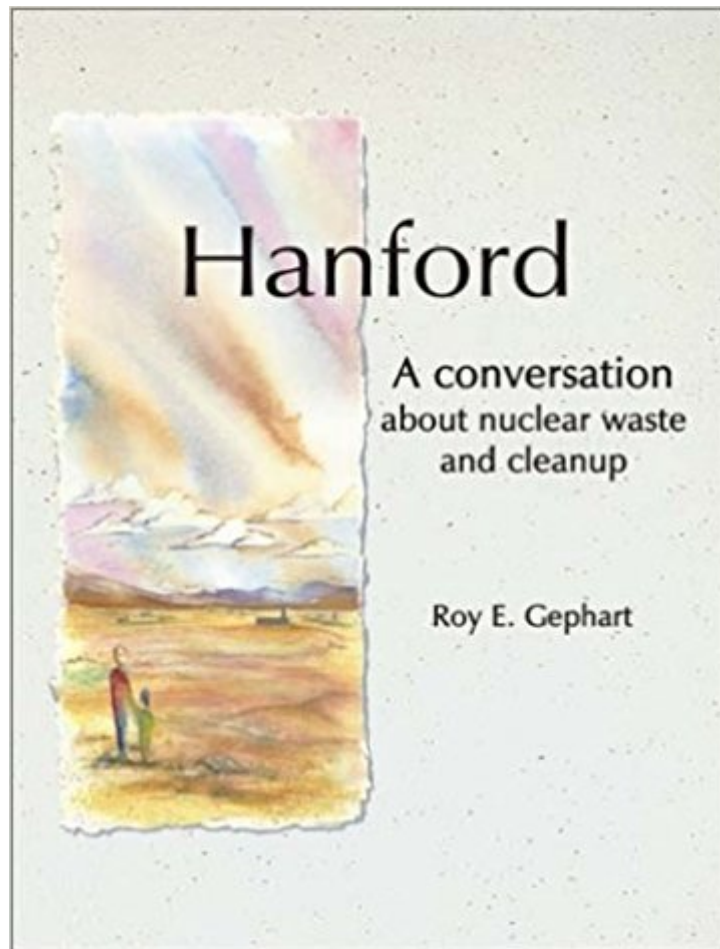




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Hanford: A Conversation About Nuclear Waste And Cleanup



Synopsis

In *Hanford: A Conversation About Nuclear Waste and Cleanup*, Roy Gephart takes us on a journey through a world of facts, values, conflicts, and choices facing the most complex environmental cleanup project in the United States, the U.S. Department of Energy's Hanford Site. Starting with the top-secret Manhattan Project, Hanford was used to create tons of plutonium for nuclear weapons. Hundreds of tons of waste remain. In an easy-to-read, illustrated text, Gephart crafts the story of Hanford becoming the world's first nuclear weapons site to release large amounts of contaminants into the environment. This was at a time when radiation biology was in its infancy, industry practiced unbridled waste dumping, and the public trusted what it was told. The plutonium market stalled with the end of the Cold War. Public accountability and environmental compliance ushered in a new cleanup mission. Today, Hanford is driven by remediation choices whose outcomes remain uncertain. It's a story whose epilogue will be written by future generations. This book is an information resource, written for the general reader as well as the technically trained person wanting an overview of Hanford and cleanup issues facing the nuclear weapons complex. Each chapter is a topical mini-series. It's an idea guide that encourages readers to be informed consumers of Hanford news, to recognize that knowledge, high ethical standards, and social values are at the heart of coping with Hanford's past and charting its future. Hanford history is a window into many environmental conflicts facing our nation; it's about building upon success and learning from failure. And therein lies a key lesson: when powerful interests are involved, no generation is above pretense.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Hanford was the first site in the world to release large amounts of radioactive contaminants into the environment. Today, it is the most complex environmental cleanup site in the Western Hemisphere. In my book *Hanford: A Conversation about Nuclear Waste and Cleanup*, I strive to help readers become informed consumers of Hanford news, to critically think about what cleanup means, and to examine the interplay of social values and science in decision-making. The story of Hanford demonstrates the struggle of how world-class science existed alongside sometimes unbridled dumping of health-threatening contaminants into the environment. Hanford history reveals how little we sometimes understand events when caught inside the middle of them. Have we learned from such past mistakes as our generation struggles with a host of its' own environmental problems? How easy it is to point fingers at others while not accepting responsibility for ourselves. We will pass along some environmental legacy to future generations. Will they be pleased with our choices?

Roy E. Gephart is a geohydrologist and senior program manager at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Richland, Washington. He has 30 years experience in environmental studies and the nuclear waste industry.

With the unrest in the world and the increasing number of countries joining the "nuclear club," it is very important that we understand the legacy of nuclear weapons and materials. Why? Because, quite simply, those that do not understand history are doomed to repeat it. Roy Gephart's book explores one important, but often ignored, part of the nuclear club -- the nuclear waste left behind. Roy does this by taking us inside the cleanup of the Hanford Site, where plutonium was created for the world's first atomic weapons. Roy discusses the types of waste created, environmental monitoring, and environmental regulations. Then, he talks about cleanup at Hanford and throughout the U.S. He explores the difficult question of what are the risks from these sites. Finally, he delves into the culture of Hanford and its impact on nuclear waste decisions. Reading this book is like having a conversation over coffee with a trusted friend, informed, open minded, fair, and never condescending. This book tells it like it is -- with no hidden agenda, no propoganda, and no scare tactics. This book should be required reading for anyone who is worried about the impacts of the "nuclear club" on the world. It would also be a great book for those that live near Manhattan Project sites.

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