



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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DOE Completes Demolition of Former Plutonium Incinerator at its Hanford site

Today workers at the U.S. Department of Energy's Hanford Site completed the demolition of the 232-Z Incinerator building, once one of the most contaminated facilities in the Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP) complex. From 1949 to 1990, the Hanford Site, in the PFP area, produced two-thirds of the country's supply of plutonium for national defense.

From 1963-1972, PFP's 232-Z Incinerator, which is now no more than a slab of concrete and debris, was a key component in the plutonium production. The incinerator burned combustible material contaminated with plutonium, allowing the recovery of the valuable plutonium ashes in order for their use in production of nuclear materials for national defense.

"This is a significant step in the cleanup of DOE's Hanford Site," said Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management James Rispoli. "The demolition of this building, and the removal of debris, continues our efforts in reducing risk to the workers, the public, and the environment. Additionally, the safe approach used by the workers to tackle this facility will be a model for tearing down similar buildings remaining."

Over the past two years, workers removed contaminated debris and equipment—enough to fill approximately 40 specially designed waste containers, the equivalent of filling three, 24-foot moving vans. This effort was required before demolition of the 2,100 square foot facility could take place.

"Workers entered the building time and again to remove contaminated equipment," said Bruce Klos, vice president of the Plutonium Finishing Plant Closure Project for Fluor Hanford. "They conducted the

work safely and should be commended for their efforts to make sure their co-workers and the environment were protected during the cleanout of the facility."

On June 11, crews with cleanup contractor Fluor Hanford began tearing down sections of the building using a mechanical shear. Air monitors were used around the perimeter of the demolition site along with misters and fogging machines to ensure the safe demolition of the building and to control dust.

Some debris will be shipped to the nation's disposal facility for transuranic waste, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico. The remaining material is being disposed of in Hanford's low-level waste landfill, known as the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF).

"While the incinerator building was small in stature—measuring approximately 2,100 square feet—it looms large in the history of this plant that was once a workhorse of the Cold War," said Keith Klein, Richland Operations Office Manager.

A regulatory milestone in the Tri-Party Agreement between the Department of Energy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Washington Department of Ecology calls for completing the demolition and removal of the building debris by September 2006. DOE expects to meet or beat this milestone.

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Note to media: Footage of the demolition is available by contacting Geoff Tyree, Fluor Hanford, at (509) 372-1145 or e-mail at [Geoffrey T Tyree@rl.gov](mailto:Geoffrey.T.Tyree@rl.gov). Footage of the demolition is accessible to the public and posted on the Department of Energy's Hanford web site. Log on to <http://www.hanford.gov/communication/video/?video=archives>, click on the 'Search' button, and look for the video titled "Demolition of 232-Z Incinerator, Plutonium Finishing Plant."

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