



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY

Richland Operations
Office

DOE News Release

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For Immediate Release:

May 10, 2010

Three Fuel Storage Facilities Removed from Hanford's Landscape

Completion of Recovery Act Project Reduces Cleanup Footprint

RICHLAND, WASH. – Gone from the Hanford landscape are three large buildings, which once stored radioactive fuel rods. In their place is a patch of ground that has been remediated, backfilled, and contoured, leaving little indication of the former fuel storage facilities that once stood.

[U.S. Department of Energy](#) (DOE) contractor [CH2M HILL Plateau Remediation Company](#) (CH2M HILL) recently finished demolition of 212-N, 212-P and 212-R buildings, which once stored freshly irradiated fuel rods from Hanford's plutonium production reactors during the Cold War.

This \$12.5 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act project has demolished more than 29,000 square feet of radioactively contaminated building space.

“By demolishing these buildings and taking care of waste sites with the help of Recovery Act funds, we are getting closer to our goal of reducing the footprint of active cleanup on the Hanford Site to less than 75 square miles,” said Dave Brockman, Manager of DOE's Richland Operations Office.

The final stage in this major demolition project involved completion of radiological surveys and soil samples in the 200 North Area to ensure all contamination had been removed.

Associated with the buildings were 12 waste sites, nine of which have been remediated. Of the remaining three, final confirmatory sampling is being performed on the first, the second is in progress with 17,500 tons of soil removed to date and remediation will begin on the third in the next several weeks.

In the early 1950s, the buildings, which are north of the center of the Hanford Site, were used as underwater storage facilities for irradiated fuel rods prior to chemical processing. The fuel rods were transported by railcar from Hanford's nuclear reactors along the Columbia River and placed underwater in 20-foot-deep basins in the 200 North Area until they could be transferred to chemical reprocessing facilities in the center of the Site (200 North Area). In later years, two of the buildings were used to store equipment and waste, including electrical transformers contaminated with PCBs, as well as contaminated railcars. The 9,707-square-foot buildings each had a concrete roof, a heavily reinforced concrete and steel frame, and a basin used to store irradiated fuel rods.

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