



300 Area

Restore the River Corridor - Transition the Central Plateau - Prepare for the Future



300 Area location of previous facilities



313 Building demolition



300 Area uranium shipment



300 Area aerial view



North 300 Area waste sites and burial grounds

Background

Initial construction of facilities in the 300 Area took place in 1943. The area's two main functions were fabrication of uranium reactor fuel (performed in the north end) and research to improve the entire production process. Facilities include buildings where reactor fuel was blended and extruded, and laboratories for mechanical, chemical, and radiological analysis. There also are various ancillary and office buildings supporting these activities. During the Cold War, many of the laboratories performed research to expand and improve the efficiency of weapons production. Outside the main building complex (located primarily to the north of the 300 Area), unlined liquid disposal areas, burial grounds, landfills, and miscellaneous disposal sites were associated with operations in the industrial complex.

Scope and Progress

Current Operations

Most of the 300 Area facilities are vacant except for those housing Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) research activities and various support activities. Design and construction of replacement laboratory space is being pursued by the Office of Science and is likely to be located closer to the existing PNNL main campus area.

Facility Deactivation, Decontamination, Decommissioning, and Demolition (D4)

As a result of fuel fabrication and research operations, several facilities remained highly contaminated. Large inventories of radioactive material also were left in the 300 Area.

Additionally, many support facilities and structures remain unused in the area and continue to deteriorate. Key facility D4 accomplishments include:

300 Area

- About 12 million curies of radioactivity have been removed from the 324 Building, which formerly was used for chemical and metallurgical research on radioactive materials.
- Nearly two metric tons of commercial spent nuclear fuel were removed from the 324 Building.
- Nearly 2,000 metric tons of leftover uranium has been safely removed from the 300 Area and either shipped off-site or disposed of on the Hanford Central Plateau.
- Completely demolished more than 70 industrial facilities and structures.
- Demolished the 313 Fuels Manufacturing Facility.
- Completed D4 of the 314 Engineering Development Laboratory seven months ahead of TPM M94-05 milestone.

Waste Sites and Burial Ground Remediation

Operations waste disposal practices in the 300 Area resulted in waste sites that include contaminated soil in unlined

liquid waste disposal areas, burial grounds, landfills, and miscellaneous unplanned spills. Several other waste sites lie beneath existing facilities and/or paved areas.

Key remediation activities to date include:

- Completed remediation of all the high volume liquid waste discharge ponds and trenches.
- Completed remediation of the 618-4 Burial Ground where 1,500 55-gallon drums of waste were discovered during excavation. Some of the drums contained depleted uranium shavings in oil or uranium oxide powder.
- Completed remediation of the 618-5 Burial Ground.
- Ongoing remediation of several burial grounds, including 618-2, 618-3, 618-7, and 618-8.

For more
information



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