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## Hanford Waste Treatment Plant receives and sets key bridge crane in High-Level Waste Facility

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**Richland, Wash.** -- Crews at the Hanford Waste Treatment Plant, also known as the “Vit Plant,” recently received and set a bridge crane that is key to progressing construction of the High-Level Waste Facility. The three-ton-capacity crane needed to be in place before essential piping and hangers could be installed above and around it.

“It took an incredible amount of teamwork and coordination between our engineering, procurement and construction organizations to deliver and, in a matter of days, safely set the crane in the facility,” Joe St. Julian, area project manager for the facility said. “This allowed construction to continue to progress at a steady pace and enables us to stay on schedule to meet project milestones.”

The bridge crane was set in a 40-foot-long, 16-foot-wide area on the northeast side of the High-Level Waste Facility. Using a tower crane, crews lifted it over the facility’s 58-foot walls and lowered it, with just a few inches of clearance at each end, onto rails installed 16 feet above the ground.

The crane weighs 6 tons and measures approximately 16 feet long, 9 feet wide and 4 feet tall. It will be used to handle 55-gallon carbon-steel drums before and after they are filled with residual solid waste. The residual waste is composed of solids, such as filters, glass shards and welding material remnants, produced during the vitrification process. It will be deposited into the drums, which are swabbed and lidded; removed from the facility inside nine-inch-thick steel casks and transported to an offsite storage location.

When operational, the bridge crane will run the length of the drum swabbing and monitoring area, as well as an additional 10 feet into a crane maintenance area. It will be operated remotely from an adjacent room.

“Setting this bridge crane is an excellent sign of advancing construction of the High-Level Waste Facility from civil construction—concrete and steel—into mechanical installations,” Gary Olsen, federal area project manager, said. The High-Level Waste Facility is the most structurally complex Vit Plant facility and is currently 35 percent constructed with a scheduled completion in 2016.

The crane was manufactured by American Crane & Equipment Corporation in Pennsylvania.

(continued)



*Bechtel National, Inc. is designing and building the world's largest radioactive waste treatment plant for the U.S. Department of Energy at the Hanford Site in southeastern Washington state. The \$12.2 billion Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant, also known as the "Vit Plant," will immobilize the radioactive liquid waste currently stored in 177 underground tanks using a process called "vitrification."*

*Vitrification involves blending the waste with molten glass and heating it to high temperatures. The mixture is then poured into stainless steel canisters. In this glass form, the waste is stable and impervious to the environment, and its radioactivity will dissipate over hundreds to thousands of years.*

*The Vit Plant will cover 65 acres with four nuclear facilities -- Pretreatment, Low-Activity Waste Vitrification, High-Level Waste Vitrification and Analytical Laboratory -- as well as operations and maintenance buildings, utilities and office space.*

*Construction of the Vit Plant began in 2001 and is now 60 percent complete. The project is scheduled to complete construction in 2016; will reach commissioning in 2019 and achieve full operations in 2022.*

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Crews at the Vit Plant recently installed a three-ton-capacity bridge crane that measures approximately 16 feet long, 9 feet wide and 4 feet tall. It will be used to handle 55-gallon carbon-steel drums before and after they are filled with residual solid waste.