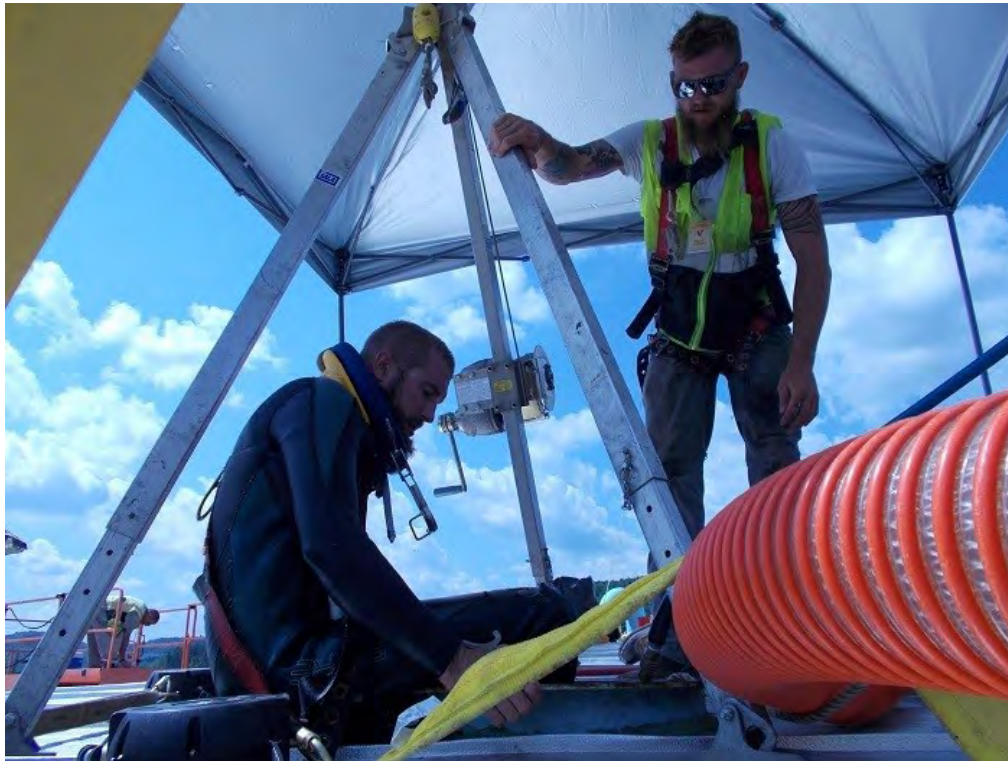


## West Valley Enlists Divers to Inspect, Clean Fire Water Storage Tank



*Drew Matteson helps Chris Kunzel safely climb out of the EM West Valley Demonstration Project's fire water storage tank after Kunzel cleaned its interior walls. The certified divers are with BIDCO Marine Group of Buffalo, New York.*

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**WEST VALLEY, N.Y.** – Trained divers working on behalf of [EM](#) recently went underwater to clean and inspect a fire water storage tank at the [West Valley Demonstration Project \(WVDP\)](#).

“Our team has planned extensively for this underwater work, and conducted several confined space rescue training drills to ensure the safety of everyone involved,” said Pat Douglass, a manager with WVDP cleanup contractor CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley. “Whenever you perform high-risk work evolutions, extensive planning, lessons learned, and practice are keys to a safe and successful outcome.”

EM maintains about 300,000 gallons of water in the 40-foot-tall tank in the event of a fire.

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*EM conducts inspections of a 40-foot-tall fire storage tank at the West Valley Demonstration Project in accordance with National Fire Protection Association requirements.*

The divers from BIDCO Marine Group of Buffalo, New York performed all work in accordance with National Fire Protection Association requirements. The inspections and cleaning were done on the exterior and interior of the 55-year-old tank, and the divers took video recordings of their work underwater.

They took readings of the tank's thickness and pitted their measurements against existing structural condition reports to determine if the tank needs to be repaired or replaced. Inspections took place on the tank roof, shell, bottom, roof support column, tank foundation, and other areas. Results of the inspections are pending.

Prior to the inspections and cleaning, EM crews prepared emergency rescue protocols. The divers then entered the tank to check for water clarity and debris buildup before determining the best plan for the inspections and cleaning.

*-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere*