

West Valley Declares Food Drive a Success After Stocking Nine Pantries



WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – The workforce at [EM's West Valley Demonstration Project \(WVDP\)](#) completed its annual food drive after 15 employees volunteered to deliver more than 119,000 pounds of food, including 400 turkeys, to nine area food pantries. This year's tally brings the cumulative donation total to more than 2.1 million pounds of food since the inception of the food drive in 1989. "The success of this annual food drive is a direct result of the generosity and kindness of employees, partners and subcontractors," said Lettie Chilson, the site's facility manager and food drive organizer. "It demonstrates the positive impact that kindness can have on a community."

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere

West Valley Prepares for Next Signature Achievement: Main Plant Demolition



Workers at the [West Valley Demonstration Project](#) prepare a section of a ventilation duct to be cut inside the Vent Wash Room. The room had been used to support former reprocessing cells inside the Main Plant Process Building.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – [EM](#) workers continue to reduce risks and prepare to deactivate the Main Plant Process Building (MPPB) for what will be the [West Valley Demonstration Project's \(WVDP\)](#) most complex demolition since crews knocked down the [Vitrification Facility](#) in 2018.

As part of the latest work, crews are removing a 26-inch-diameter ventilation duct that carried exhaust from past operations at the MPPB. They are performing the work remotely to reduce exposure risk.

“The effort in the Vent Wash Room involves extensive planning and deliberate execution to perform the work safely and compliantly,” said Steve Bousquet, EM WVDP deputy federal project director for the Main Plant. “The [WVDP](#) team continues to reduce legacy risks while protecting employees, the public and the environment.”



The Vent Wash Room had housed a ventilation "scrubber" that removed airborne particulates resulting from fuel reprocessing operations that ceased in 1972. The location supported former reprocessing cells inside the MPPB.

EM and prime contractor CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV) have completed 14 of 28 cuts to the ventilation duct and removed seven of 19 sections of the duct from the Vent Wash Room. Prior to this work, crews constructed a containment tent above the work area and an access door to support the project.

"Close work activities like this involve teamwork and sharing lessons learned throughout the process," said Tom Dogal, CHBWV facility disposition manager. "The **WVDP** team used employee feedback to further improve execution while also adhering to enhanced COVID-19 protocols."

Several other areas within the MPPB — including the product purification and chemical process cells, and a fuel receiving and storage facility — sent exhaust to the Vent Wash Room through the ductwork. The exhaust was then directed to a ventilation exhaust cell where it was filtered before being discharged to the plant's stack.

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