

West Valley demolishes its fourth ancillary facility

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Contributed photo

An excavator is used to demolish and remove two boilers from the Utility Room Extension building. Both boilers were later size-reduced and packaged for offsite disposal.

Crews recently demolished the Utility Room Extension building (URE) at the West Valley Demonstration Project. The URE was added to the Main Plant Utility Room in 1994 and 1995 to provide additional power needed for the vitrification melter that was used to solidify 600,000 of high-level liquid radioactive waste from 1996 to 2002. This recent demolition brings EM's total number of structures removed at West Valley to 63.

The original 30-year old electrical supply system was reaching the end of life, and new reliable equipment was needed to support High-Level Waste Vitrification operations. By adding the URE instead of simply replacing the aging equipment, there was no long outage or impact to ongoing site operations. DOE WVDP Director Bryan Bower commended the team for its work.

"The completion of this work changes the landscape and footprint of the WVDP site and is a reminder of the ongoing progress here!"

The URE housed two oil-free air compressors to supply breathing air and instrument air to the site, two boilers to provide steam for heating and process operations, an emergency generator for the site, control room for utility operations, and an electrical switchgear room that supported the building and its equipment.

Scott Anderson, president of CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV), EM's cleanup contractor, said his employees used their combined knowledge and lessons learned to safely complete this work.

"The CHBWV team continues to make great progress towards the demolition of these historically significant facilities at West Valley with the completion of the URE. Our team continues to complete demolition work at the site in a safe and environmentally-sound manner:"