

West Valley Grouts Underground Cell in Advance of Major Demolition



One of 44 trucks delivers grout to the West Valley Demonstration Project to place inside a cell 30 feet below ground.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – [EM](#) and cleanup contractor CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV) recently began grouting a large underground cell at the [West Valley Demonstration Project](#) (WVDP) to provide structural stability for when heavy demolition equipment operates aboveground to tear down the Main Plant Process Building.

The cell, which is nearly 30 feet below ground, will remain in place until the underground portion of the Main Plant Process Building is removed in the future. Crews continue to prepare the building for demolition.

“The WVDP team’s work was well planned and executed in an effort to maintain safety, including the addition of COVID-19 protocols,” EM WVDP Safety and Site Programs Team Leader Jennifer Dundas said. “This work is part of DOE’s efforts to reduce legacy risks in preparation for the future demolition of the Main Plant Process Building, an EM priority for 2020.”

A total of 44 trucks supported the grouting effort. Prior to grouting, all major process equipment was removed, interior surfaces were decontaminated and sealed, all utilities and connections with adjoining structures were disconnected, and characterization data was obtained to plan for future waste disposal.

Before crews deactivated the cell, it had contained radiological and hazardous contaminants resulting from spent nuclear fuel reprocessing activities.



EM Update | Vol. 12, Issue 33 | Nov. 3, 2020

"This work activity was successful because it was a group effort," said Scott Chase, facility disposition operations manager. "Our crew worked with the engineering division on the overall plan and we had good support from the radiation control and security divisions as well."

Used in spent nuclear fuel reprocessing operations in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the cell is 46 feet long, 11 feet wide, and nearly 20 feet tall.

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere