



West Valley Reduces Risks, Prepares to Demolish Main Plant, an EM 2022 Priority

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – Workers at the [West Valley Demonstration Project \(WVDP\)](#) recently removed a large ventilation duct from the Main Plant Process Building, another step in reducing risk and preparing the facility for demolition, an [EM 2022 priority](#).

As part of deactivation activities, crews finished cutting and removing the 26-inch-diameter duct that carried exhaust from past operations at the building.

“The effort in the Vent Wash Room was successful because of the extensive planning, and deliberate and safe execution of the work,” said Steve Bousquet, EM’s WVDP deputy federal project director for the Main Plant project. “The [WVDP](#) team continues DOE’s mission to reduce legacy risks while protecting employees, the public and the environment.”



A section of a ventilation duct inside the Vent Wash Room at the Main Plant Process Building is shown before it was cut remotely with a diamond wire saw. The completed project involved 28 separate cuts to safely remove 19 sections of the duct.

As part of deactivation activities inside the Vent Wash Room at the Main Plant Process Building, a section of a 26-inch ventilation duct, shown here prior to removal, was cut by a diamond wire saw.



EM and its **WVDP** prime contractor, CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV), completed 28 cuts and removed 19 sections of the duct from the room within the Main Plant. Workers performed this deactivation work remotely to avoid potential radiation exposure.

“This team used teamwork, lessons learned and feedback throughout the process to accomplish this work activity safely,” said Tom Dogal, CHBWV facility disposition manager. “The **WVDP** team should be commended for safely performing the work while in a confined space with layers of protective clothing, using remote tools and adhering to enhanced COVID-19 protocols.”

The Vent Wash Room served as a support area for the former reprocessing cells inside the building. It housed a ventilation “scrubber” that removed airborne particulates resulting from fuel reprocessing operations that ceased in 1972. The scrubber has been prepared for removal during the Main Plant demolition.

Several other areas within the Main Plant — including the product purification and chemical process cells, and a fuel receiving and storage facility — sent exhaust to the 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.

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere