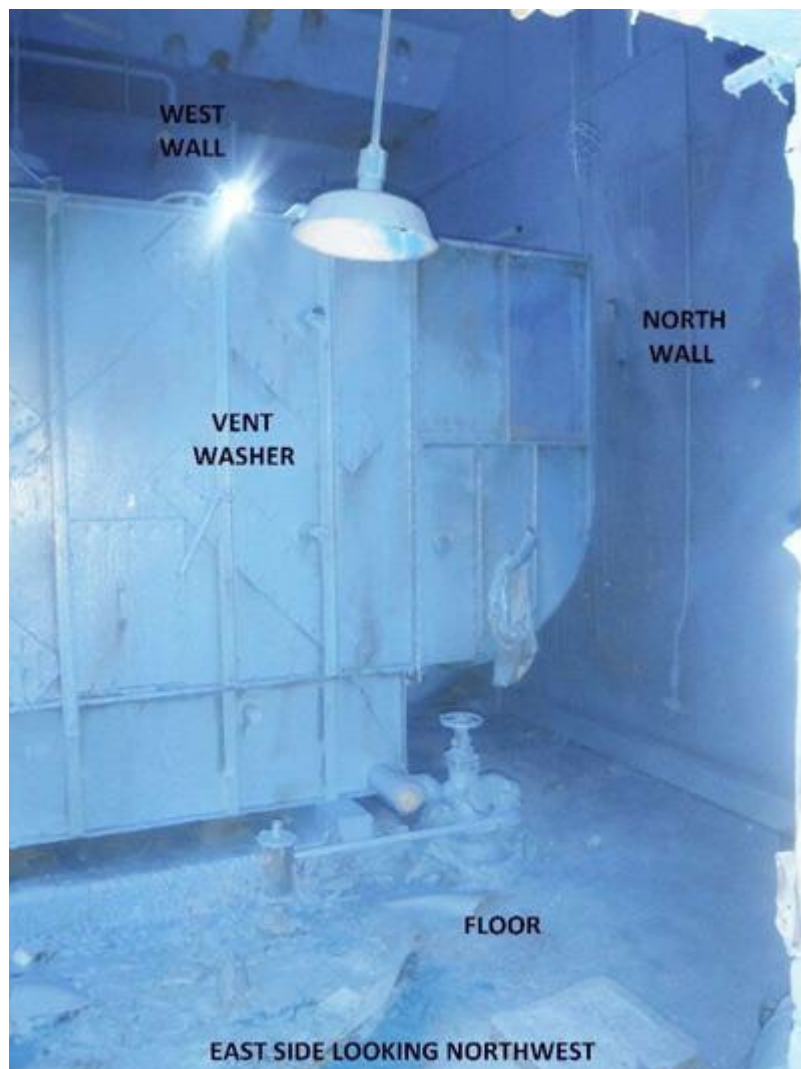


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Another high-hazard cell deactivated at WVDP

1 hr ago



Workers completed the deactivation of the Ventilation Wash Room, which housed a ventilation “scrubber” that removed airborne particulates resulting from fuel reprocessing operations that ceased in 1972. Fixative has been applied to the room in preparation for the future demolition of the Main Plant Process Building.

WEST VALLEY — The Department of Energy (DOE) and its prime contractor at the West Valley Demonstration Project, completed the deactivation of the Ventilation Wash Room, which housed a ventilation “scrubber” that removed airborne particulates resulting from fuel reprocessing operations that ceased in 1972.

During deactivation, the scrubber was prepared for removal and will be removed during the future demolition of the Main Plant Process Building.

“The safe execution of this work is due to the combination of extensive planning, deliberate speed, and using worker feedback throughout the deactivation,” said Steve Bousquet Department of Energy federal project director for the demolition. “The WVDP team continues its strong commitment to safely protecting its workers, the public, and the environment while reducing legacy risks at the site.”

Deactivation of this cell included the removal of a 26-inch diameter ventilation duct that carried exhaust from past operations at the MPPB. This activity involved 28 cuts and the removal of 19 sections of the ventilation duct from the wash room. Finally, workers demobilized equipment, removed debris, and applied fixatives to the cell.

Incorporating feedback from workers led to a safe deactivation of the VWR, which included the idea to perform the work remotely to keep potential exposure to radiation as low as reasonably achievable (ALARA).

The operators core bored multiple penetrations into the wash room to allow the placement of a diamond wire saw outside the cell. Short entries were made into the cell to adjust the location of the diamond wire prior to each cut of the ventilation duct.

Through this approach, operators could limit potential exposures, keeping with ALARA principles. Contingency plans were also included in the work instruction package to provide an effective and immediate response to a differing condition, providing operators with pre-approved instructions should conditions change.

“Working in the VWR was physically challenging when you include radiological and industrial hazards, layers of protective clothing, limited mobility and COVID protocols,” said Tom Dogal,

facility disposition manager. “This crew used lessons learned to enhance safety, improve efficiency, and reduce exposure to job-related hazards. They put their collective knowledge into practice.”

During fuel reprocessing activities in the 1960s and '70s, 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 VWR 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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