August 19, 2010 Nevada Site Office Environmental Management

EM NEWS FLASH

Historic R-MAD Building is History!

After months of preparation and demolition activities, the Reactor Maintenance, Assembly, and Disassembly facility (R-MAD) is no longer part of the Nevada Test Site landscape. The final remnants of the building were packaged and shipped away on July 15, 2010, putting an end to the facility's long and colorful history.

The demolition of R-MAD began in November of 2009 and occurred in several phases, including: an asbestos cleanup phase; explosive demolition of the stack and water tower; non-explosive demolition activities to remove key parts of the building, such as lead doors and non high bay areas; and finally a full demolition of the high bay areas using explosives. While most of the building debris from the 80-room, five-level facility was packaged and taken to the Nevada Test Site Area 5 Radioactive Waste Management Site for disposal, approximately ten percent of the R-MAD waste was permanently entombed in three on-site basement areas, saving significant costs in packaging and shipping.

Though R-MAD had not been operational since 1973, the facility was once part of an important national mission. The Atomic Energy Commission constructed R-MAD, along with several other facilities, such as the Engine Maintenance, Assembly, and Disassembly (E-MAD) building, the Pluto facility, and three test cell structures, to develop and test nuclear rocket engines.

The conclusion of R-MAD demolition is part of a State of Nevada Division of Environmental Protection agreement that requires the U.S. Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration Nevada Site Office (NSO) to clean up designated contaminated sites across the Nevada Test Site. The NSO was able to accelerate cleanup at many of these sites, including R-MAD, after receiving $54 million in American Reinvestment and Recovery Act funds. Recovery Act funds are designed to help sites, like the NSO, reach their closure goals more quickly and efficiently, and reduce the environmental liability throughout the U.S. Department of Energy Complex.

Demolition activities at the Nevada Test Site are not expected to slow down any time soon. Crews are scheduled to begin demolition of the Pluto facility in September 2010, moving on to Test Cell C in October.

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