

DOE NEWS

U.S. Department of Energy Portsmouth/Paducah Project Office

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 27, 2007

DOE COMPLETES MAJOR WASTE FACILITY CLEANOUT BY REMOVING THOUSANDS OF CONTAINERS ON SCHEDULE *MEETS COMMITMENT FOR INDUSTRIAL REUSE BY USEC CENTRIFUGE PROGRAM*

Piketon, OH – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today announced the completion of a major cleanup effort at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant that consisted of emptying a 20-acre waste storage facility of thousands of containers of hazardous and mixed waste (mixed waste contains both hazardous and radioactive constituents). Removal of the waste allows the facility to be turned over July 31 for reuse by a commercial centrifuge program that will begin full operations in 2012.

This accomplishment signifies the reduction of more than 20,000 tons of waste generated from nearly 50 years of past uranium enrichment operations at the plant and from cleanup activities conducted since the early 1990s.

In 1993, there were over 49,000 containers of waste stored in the X-7725 building. The volume of waste removed from the building would cover a football field nearly 14 feet deep.

William Murphie, Manager of the Department of Energy's Portsmouth/Paducah Project Office, officially declared the facilities are available for turnover on July 31 to USEC Inc. for their American Centrifuge Plant.

“This achievement, in combination with the earlier successful completion of DOE's former centrifuge equipment removal project, is clearly a major stride in the overall cleanup mission at the plant,” said Murphie. “This was a huge feat that shows the dedication and

Key Facts

- ❖ In the early 1990s, more than 49,000 containers of waste, with a total weight over 20,000 tons, were stored in the X-7725 building.
- ❖ Total volume of waste removed would cover a football field 14 feet deep.
- ❖ If the waste containers were stacked end to end, they would extend more than 26 miles into space, reaching the top of the stratosphere.
- ❖ 1,014 semi-truck shipments were made, totaling 1.6 million miles (equal to 63 trips around the world) and without a major accident.

focus of our workforce to accomplish a project of this magnitude safely and on schedule.”

Gerald Boyd, Manager of DOE’s Oak Ridge Operations Office which administers the facility lease to USEC said, “This accomplishment has allowed the Department to meet its commitment to make the facility available to USEC so they may deploy centrifuge technology in support of nuclear power as an important component of our domestic energy supply.”

The majority of the waste in the building was shipped to approved permanent disposal sites. More than 1,063 containers of process waste in the building were waste streams that required special treatment before they could be dispositioned. The waste presented unique challenges due to the uranium and technetium content. LATA/Parallax Portsmouth, DOE’s environmental remediation contractor, sponsored a vendor’s conference to attract companies from across the country and awarded a contract in February 2006 for repackaging the process waste in order to meet Department of Transportation specifications for shipment. Within 18 months, all of this special treatment waste will be shipped from the Piketon plant site for treatment and final disposal using new innovative approaches.

LATA/Parallax removed the last containers from the building on May 31, 2007 to free up the more than 265,000 square feet of storage space. Since that time, the floors have been sampled and cleaned in accordance with regulatory requirements. Representatives from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency inspected the closed storage areas on June 28, 2007 and determined all actions were completed in compliance with state regulations on July 10, 2007.

Building X-7725 was constructed in 1983 as part of DOE’s original Gas Centrifuge Enrichment Plant (GCEP). It was designed as a support facility to assemble and rebuild centrifuge machines.

DOE terminated the GCEP project in 1985 and the X-7725 building was modified in the early 1990s for permitted hazardous waste safe storage because of the facility’s large areas of floor space kept under climate-controlled conditions.

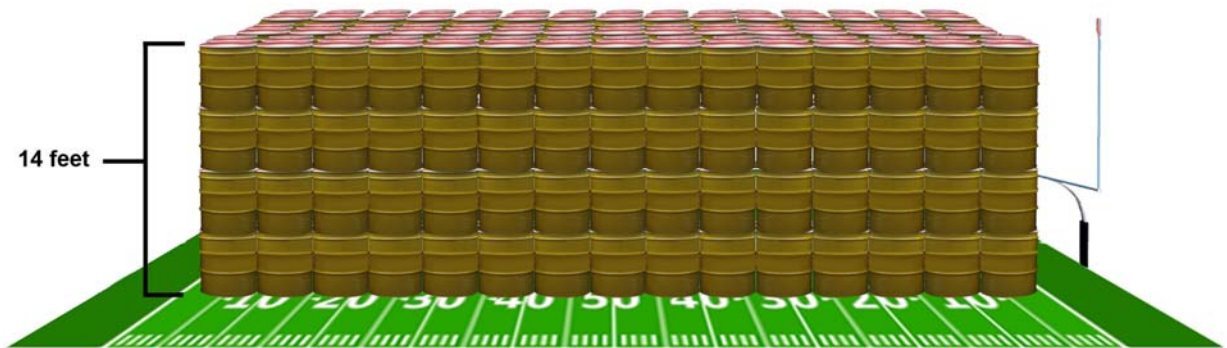
The X-7725 building will once again be used for its original purpose as a centrifuge support facility for USEC’s new advanced centrifuge program.

Further information is available at: <http://www.lpports.com>.

Photo 1: More than 49,000 containers of waste were stored in 23 different areas of Building X-7725 at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in 1993. Pictured is a storage area in the facility containing 55-gallon drums of waste.

Photo 2: Shown is the same storage area after removal of waste containers.

Graphic: Graphic shows the total volume of waste removed from the X-7725 building would cover a football field 14 feet high.



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Any questions may be directed to the LATA/Parallax Public Affairs Office at (740) 897-2336.

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