

CURRENT

Newsletter for the River Corridor Closure Project

SAFETY • PEOPLE • RESULTS

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Innovation at work

When the Field Remediation Closure Project team unexpectedly encountered spent reactor fuel while cleaning up 100-B/C Area burial grounds, they stopped work and created an innovative sorting technique. The new approach is now being used at the B/C and F areas and is expected to help in cleanup of other Hanford areas.

"This is an example of team members – Washington Closure Hanford employees, subcontractor staff, craft supervisors and technicians – asking 'why not' and working together to improve worker safety and gain efficiencies," said Rex Miller, 100-B/C Field Remediation manager.

The process began after workers turned up highly radioactive spent fuel pieces and reactor hardware. "The discoveries exceeded our standard health and safety plans along with the project authorization bases. So to protect workers and remain compliant, we stopped work immediately," Rex said.

"For the 70-person team to get past this hurdle and back to work safely, we had to completely rethink our technical approach," Rex said.

The "old" way

In the previously accepted practice, workers dressed in full personal protection equipment used visual inspection, long-handled tools and survey instruments to find, remove and segregate high-dose items as they cascaded down 20- to 30-foot-high mounds.

"Given the materials we were finding, employees were constantly at risk of exposure to radioactive and hazardous materials, as well as nearby heavy equipment," Rex said.

A radically new approach

The new approach took shape through a series of open team discussions and brainstorming sessions. "We encouraged anyone with knowledge of the work to contribute what turned out to be some common sense and practical ways to do a job that is better, safer and radically different from the previous process," Rex said.



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River Corridor Closure Contractor for the



U.S. Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office

Project to showcase worker safety at expo

The River Corridor Closure Project will have a booth at the 12th annual Hanford Health and Safety Expo at the TRAC Facility in Pasco on May 23 - 24.

“Our booth will showcase how our employees’ commitment to working safely every day on the job is demonstrated in our safety record and cleanup results,” said Greg Meyer, Environment, Safety, Quality and Health director. “We want everyone who attends the expo to leave knowing that every member of our team is contributing to safely cleaning up the River Corridor.”

This year, the expo will highlight outstanding performances in worker safety and health, home safety and ways our community provides safety in everyday activities. In addition, a variety of activities and demonstrations will be presented on the Atrium stage.

For more information about the expo and planned activities and demonstrations, visit the website at <http://www.hanford.gov/rl/?page=150&parent=63>

For more information about the project’s booth, contact John Crigler at 372-9179.

“Working towards the future” conference planned

“Working towards the future” is the theme of the 19th Annual Hanford Office Professionals Training and Development Conference, hosted by Duratek Federal Services.

The event will be held April 18 and 19 from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Kennewick Red Lion Hotel (formerly Cavanaugh’s), 1101 N. Columbia Center Blvd.

Both days of the conference will provide identical programs to allow flexibility in scheduling for companies and participants and to accommodate up to 200 participants daily.

Now, an excavator operator in supplied air digs up and mixes waste material in place before any of it is removed. The materials remain in place until air sampling indicates that the potential radionuclides have decayed to a level posing minimal risk to workers.

Dump trucks then are used to place the material in a series of shallow sorting cells, instead of stockpiling it in mounds. Each sorting cell is 300 feet long by 20 feet wide by 3 feet deep and surrounded by a low soil berm that provides radiation shielding. Waste materials are spread out in the cell no more than a foot deep, which again helps minimize potential worker exposure.

The team-designed gamma array survey instrument, or gamma pipe, is then put to work mounted to a Bobcat and pulled over the cells to remotely survey waste material.



The team-designed gamma array survey instrument, or gamma pipe, that is mounted to a Bobcat is pulled over the cells to remotely survey waste material. Any suspect material is removed from the cell, and workers sort it using long-handled tools. Any high-dose items are removed and secured pending treatment and disposal.

“We’re able to survey waste material faster and more accurately,” he continued. “We use less water because we don’t have to repeatedly spray stockpiled materials. Since the posted radiological zones are smaller than with the former method, we have a smaller area to survey and we use fewer signs, boundary rope and posts.”

The new approach has proven so successful it’s being applied at several other River Corridor Closure Project burial ground cleanup sites, including F, K and D areas.

Thanks team

Team members from radiological safety, industrial safety, engineering and construction management worked together to improve the process. Thanks go to Rex Miller, Ron Belden, Doug Bowers, Mike Clancy, Steve DeMers, Greg Dixon, Jonetta Everano, John Stephens, Dean Strom and Jon Wiles from Washington Closure Hanford; Mike Fitzpatrick and Barry Poorman from Eberline Services Hanford; Ned Hutchins, Wayne Smith and Bassel Younes from Federal Engineers & Constructors and the 51 other members of the combined team for their support.



Using the new approach, once material has decayed to a level posing minimal risk to workers, dump trucks are used to place it in a series of shallow sorting cells.

Any suspect materials are removed from the cell and workers sort it using long-handled tools. Any high-dose items are removed and secured pending treatment and disposal. Remaining soil and debris are loaded into containers and disposed at ERDF.

Using the new approach, worker exposure rates have been reduced by more than three times. “People no longer are working for extended periods of time close to material stockpiles that could contain radioactive or hazardous materials,” Rex said.

The program has something for everyone. Dr. Larry Bailey will discuss humor in the workplace, while the Hanford Patrol will demonstrate an explosive detection unit. Troy English and Jill Harvill will discuss the importance of stretching and exercise and Dick Mayer will share ideas about respect in the workplace. Finally, Larry Hoover, with Avery, discusses business solutions for greater productivity.

Registration runs from March 28 through April 6. For more information, contact Brenda Kenton at 372-9245.

Employee Association officers elected

Washington Closure Hanford and Eberline Services Hanford employees have elected the first slate of Employee Association officers and directors.

The new officers and directors are

Rob Miller, president
Todd Nelson, vice-president, Administration
Lynette Bennett, vice-president, Activities
Lori Huntley, treasurer
Carrie Locke, secretary

New directors are Theresa Baker, Shane Bigham, Nancy Brower, Tracy Heidelberg, Eva Lauber and Marie Williams.

MS Walk planned

You can help fight multiple sclerosis by participating in this year's local MS Walk.

The local MS Walk (approximately 4.5 miles) starts at 9:30 a.m., Saturday, April 1, in Columbia Park. Walkers will be asked to check-in at 8:30 for coffee, pastry, pick up a T-shirt and pose for a team photo.

MS is a chronic disease of the central nervous system affecting the brain and spinal cord. One new case of multiple sclerosis is diagnosed every hour. MS usually

Team achieves first one million safe hours

The River Corridor Closure Project team achieved its first one million hours worked without a lost-day accident on March 9.

"Every day since August 27, each member of our team has helped the River Corridor Closure Project achieve this goal," said Project Manager Pat Pettiette. "We've reached this goal by the things our employees do daily to make their jobs safe – from wearing appropriate dress for the job to safely using equipment and to taking a safety time out when there's any concern about safety – it all counts. Thank you to everyone."

The Spring Safety Campaign is underway with a goal of zero recordable injuries through May 28.

We Made it...

1 Million Safe Hours



Stoller named new ERDF subcontractor

The S.M. Stoller Corp. initiated mobilization and transition activities for the operation of ERDF last week. Washington Closure Hanford awarded a subcontract worth up to \$22 million to the small business earlier this month.

Stoller

"We're pleased to be working with Stoller and its team to operate ERDF," said Jeff James, Waste Operations director. "Stoller had the lowest price of four bidders, all of which were technically capable of doing the work."

Stoller, headquartered in Lafayette, Colo., will be responsible for landfill operations, which include transporting and maintaining roll-on/roll-off waste containers within the facility, receiving all types of waste containers, placing and compacting waste within the facility and stabilizing or treating waste as necessary. They also provide dust control at the facility.

"We recognize the importance ERDF plays in the River Corridor cleanup strategy. We're excited about this opportunity and have a strong leadership team in place that's eager to get started," said Nicholas Lombardo, S.M. Stoller Corp. president.

The Stoller team includes E2 Consulting Engineers of Golden, Colo.; Washington Safety Management Solutions of Boise, Idaho, a subsidiary of Washington Group International; Rogers Surveying of Richland; J-U-B Engineers of Kennewick, Wash.; and American Electric of Richland.

Duratek was the former ERDF subcontractor. "The Duratek subcontract had been in place since ERDF opened in 1996. They've provided excellent service over the past decade, and we appreciate the work they've done," Jeff added.

strikes adults in the prime of life – between the ages of 20 and 50.



For more information, visit the registration website at www.nationalmssociety.org/was

Contact: Lynette Bennett at 531-5974.

What is ...

We hear the term “D4” all the time, but what does it stand for?

“D4” is a new description the U.S. Department of Energy used in its Request For Proposal for the River Corridor Closure Contract. Each D4 step has some unique characteristics, but the outcome is the same as it’s always been for decontamination and decommissioning (D&D).

Deactivation is related to shutting down any operations or processes that may be ongoing as part of the building lifecycle.

Decommissioning is the process of removing energy sources, such as electricity, steam or natural gas.

Decontamination is the process of removing or stabilizing radioactive and hazardous contaminated materials, including such items as light ballasts and chemicals.

Demolition is removal of the building structure and slab or foundations.

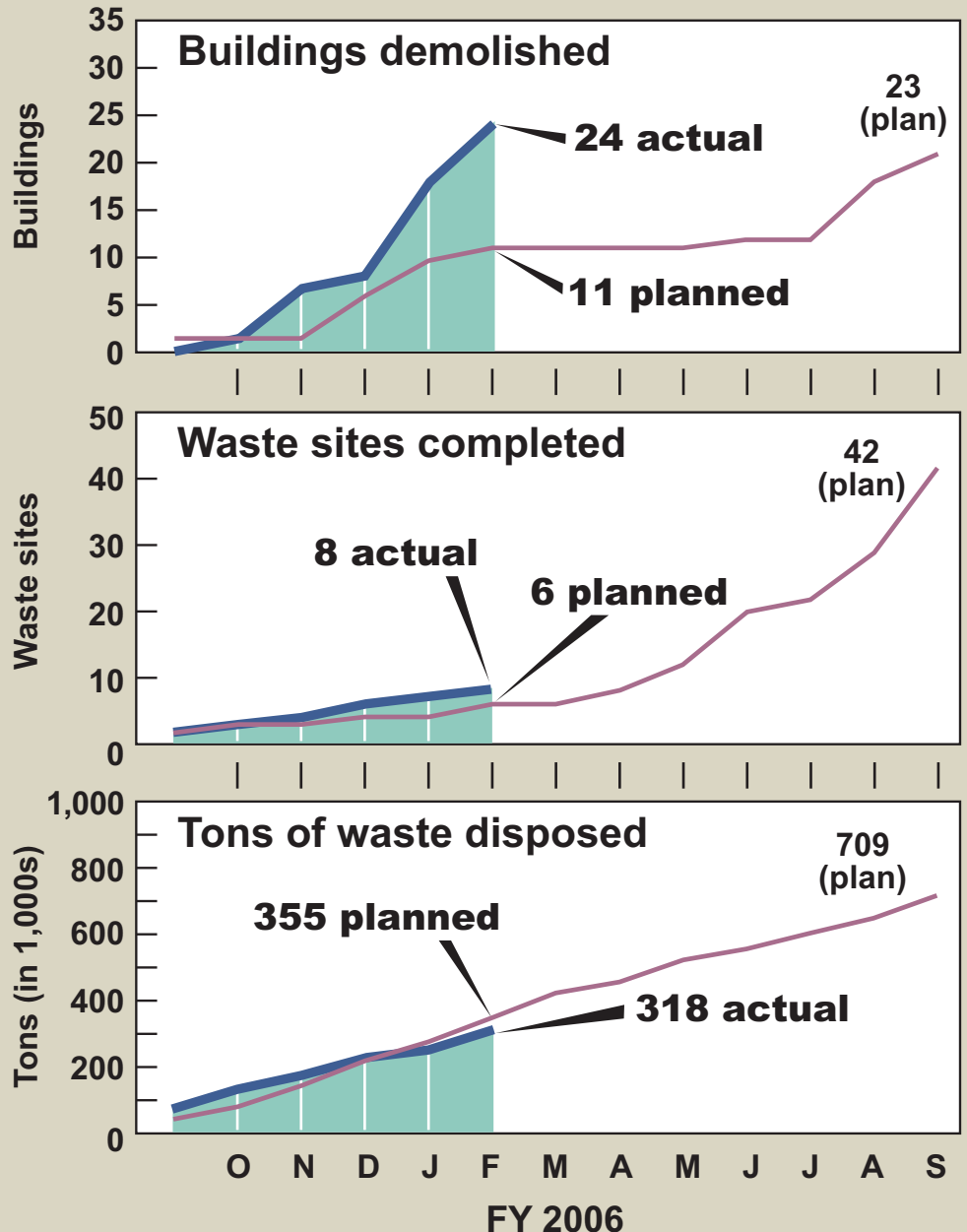
Submit questions you would like answered to Edye Jenkins at edye.jenking@wch-rcc.com

A glimpse at cleanup results

The River Corridor Closure Project is making a difference at Hanford.

The tables below depict the actual and planned RCC Project work for the current fiscal year to demolish Hanford facilities, clean up waste sites and dispose of contaminated materials in the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility.

Cleanup results



Comments or questions?

Please call Edye Jenkins at 372-9176

Or you may Email: wchnews@wch-rcc.com

