

N Reactor Guard Tower Demolition Represents More Cleanup Progress

Iconic guard tower along the Columbia River represented Hanford's previous mission of plutonium production

Background

N Reactor's overall cleanup progress is on schedule to complete 140 waste sites and demolish 109 of the reactor's support structures by the end of 2012. The 220 square mile River Corridor Cleanup project, DOE's largest environmental cleanup closure project, is on schedule to be complete by 2015.

Workers are removing the iconic guard tower atop a river water intake facility – a final step before beginning demolishing the river structures that supported N Reactor during its operating years of 1963 – 1987.

The guard tower shack was wrapped with bullet-resistant steel plating and had one inch thick bullet-resistant glass. These structures extend from the shoreline into the river.

The guard tower is one of the last symbols from Hanford's Cold War operations.



Using a phased cleanup approach known as Deactivation, Decontamination, Decommissioning, and Demolition (D4) at N Reactor, the Department of Energy and its contractor, Washington Closure Hanford, are on schedule to complete cleanup activities at Hanford's largest nuclear reactor.



N Reactor cleanup is nearly complete, which includes removal of water intake structures that cooled the reactor or provided water to generate steam for electricity.

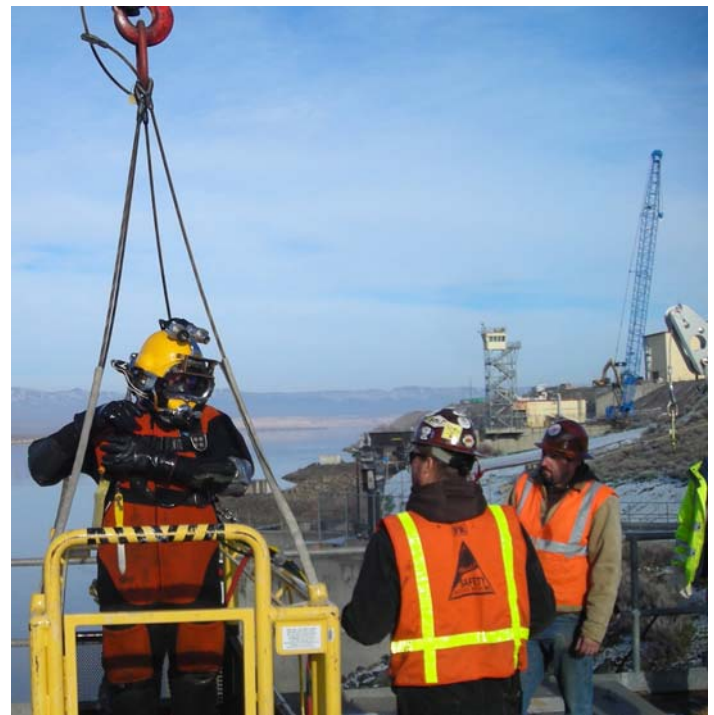


The guard tower stands approximately 62 feet above the deck of a river water intake structure along the Columbia River.

An earthen barrier was installed so demolition of river structures and the guard tower can be done safely.



Each river intake structure had four primary electric pumps. Each pump supplied N Reactor with 105,000 gallons of water per minute for cooling water.



Divers inspected and removed sediment inside the 30-foot deep river intake structures.