

January 2011

Iconic Hanford Dome Removed

Another milestone in cleanup progress at Hanford happened when crews removed the dome from the 309 Building test reactor in Hanford's 300 Area.

Built in 1960, the 309 Building Plutonium Recycle Test Reactor and its distinctive dome have long been symbols of Hanford's nuclear mission. The dome was removed as part of the \$2.4 billion effort to clean up Hanford's River Corridor, the nation's largest environmental cleanup closure project.

Between the beginning days of Hanford in 1944 and the end of its plutonium production mission in 1989, more than 300 buildings occupied the 300 Area. Now there are less than two dozen mission support facilities remaining. The 300 Area is located only one mile north of the city of Richland and is located adjacent to a publicly accessible road.

"As we demolish buildings at Hanford, we often talk about how we're changing the skyline," said Dan Elkins, 300 Area cleanup manager for Washington Closure Hanford. "With the removal of the 309 Building dome, there won't be much of a skyline left in the 300 Area."



The 309 Building dome was painted various colors over the years – white, silver, black – but for 50 years served as an icon for Hanford's nuclear mission.



The 67-ton steel dome was removed January 15, 2011.

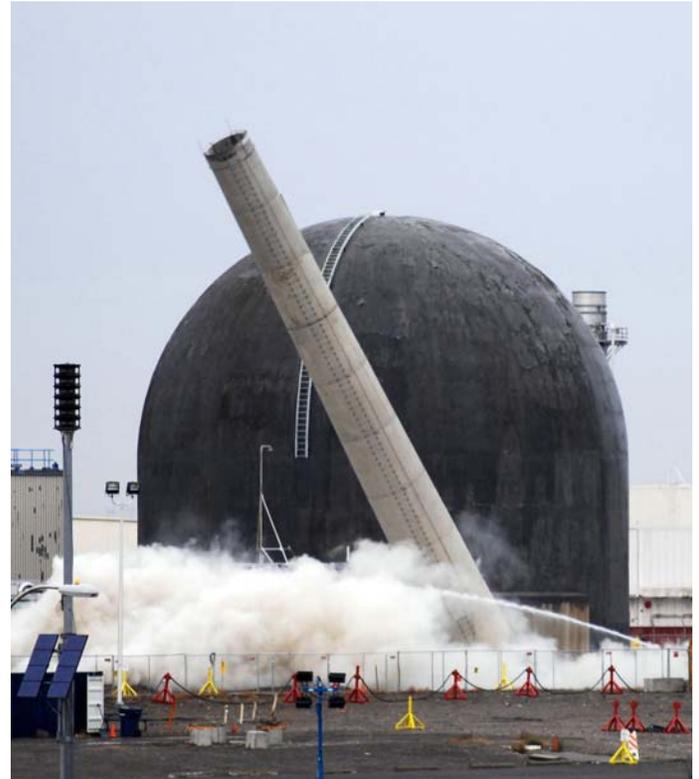


The 67-ton dome is made of ¼-inch-thick steel plate that sits atop cement walls. Within the facility was the Plutonium Recycle Test Reactor. The facility was built in 1960 and operated until 1969. Its primary purpose was to support the development of alternative fuels for the commercial nuclear power industry.

Once the dome is removed it will be cut up into smaller pieces. The walls will be removed, as will the test reactor located within the building. All the materials will be transported to Hanford's onsite Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility for disposal. The demolition and disposal of the facility will cost about \$11 million and will be completed in the fall of 2013.

Washington Closure manages the River Corridor Closure Project for the U.S. Department of Energy and is on track to complete the project by 2015. The company is responsible for demolishing 486 buildings, cleaning up 396 waste sites, placing two reactors and one nuclear facility in interim safe storage and managing the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility.

Washington Closure is a limited liability company owned by URS, Bechtel National and CH2M Hill.



In October 2010, the 309 Building stack was toppled as part of the work to prepare the test reactor for demolition.



Construction of the Plutonium Recycle Test Reactor was completed in 1960. The reactor operated from 1960-68.