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News Release

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Fernald Completes Silo 3 Waste Campaign

CINCINNATI - Today, the Department of Energy (DOE) and cleanup contractor Fluor Fernald announced the completion of waste removal, packaging and shipping of 5,100 cubic yards of thorium-bearing radioactive waste residues. The waste has been stored for over 50 years in an aging concrete silo, referred to as Silo 3. This milestone represents one of the last major steps toward safely completing the accelerated Fernald environmental cleanup. Wastes stored in Silos 1, 2 and 3 have long been viewed as the greatest health and environmental risks at the site.

"Completion of the Silo 3 remediation project is another example of DOE meeting its commitment to safely clean-up aging facilities like Fernald, where millions of pounds of uranium was produced during nearly 40 years of operation," said DOE Fernald Closure Project Director Johnny Reising.

In 2004, Fluor Fernald finished design and construction of the \$41 million waste extraction and packaging facility. In April 2005, operators working on top of the silo began vacuuming the powdery byproduct, which was then conveyed to an adjacent packaging facility. Here the material was mixed with an additive to reduce the risk of dispersion and loaded into Department of Transportation IP2 approved soft-sided packages. Two fill stations were used to load 2,297 bags of conditioned material. The sealed bags were carefully loaded into sealand containers with four bags per container. The byproduct was transported off site by truck to Envirocare of Utah for disposal. The 12-month shipping campaign went without incident and included 285 round trips to Utah covering over 1 million miles.

The extraction, treatment, packaging and shipping operations were performed with an excellent safety and radiological compliance record. In fact, there wasn't a single lost-time or OSHA recordable accident and only two minor first aid cases in over 78,000 manhours worked including 8,500 entries into contamination zones. Overall this was a remarkable achievement considering the difficult conditions and the level of protective equipment workers wore to perform their work.

"I'm proud of how our workers performed on one of the most technically challenging and environmentally hazardous projects I've seen in 30 years in this business," said Fluor Fernald Closure Project Director Con Murphy.

Pneumatic retrieval of waste from the silo was effective for a majority of the material. However, the final 15 percent proved more difficult due mainly to moisture buildup within the concrete structure, which caused the material to crust and harden like cement to the silo walls and floor. As part of the initial job plan a remotely controlled excavator was brought in through an opening

cut in the silo wall. The excavator effectively dislodged the remaining waste allowing workers to complete extraction operations. Demolition crews are now in the process of decontaminating and dismantling the silo and waste packaging facility.

“As neighbors, we’ve always had to worry about the consequences of some sort of catastrophic silo failure. That risk is now gone. With the cleanup nearly complete, we can see the day when Fernald is once again an asset to this community,” said Fernald Residents for Environmental Safety and Health President Lisa Crawford.

Fluor expects to complete the cleanup, soil certification and restoration of the 1,050-acre former uranium production plant this summer. The DOE’s Office of Legacy Management will be responsible for the long-term stewardship of the site once cleanup is complete.

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