



Energy Communities Alliance

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ECA Update: November 7, 2016

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WIPP confirms rock fall, work resumes

Current-Argus

November 5, 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 2016

9

DOE-EM Site Specific
Advisory Board
Meeting in Las Vegas,
NV

[More info here](#)

November 2016

9

DOE-EM Site Specific
Advisory Board
Meeting in
Oak Ridge, TN



CARLSBAD — WIPP officials have confirmed that a rock fall occurred in the underground on Thursday.

Workers were evacuated after a loud noise was heard and salt dust was observed in the air on Thursday afternoon.

A team of geotechnical and radiological control personnel, a representative from the Mine Safety and Health Administration and the mine rescue team reentered the underground on Friday morning.

They discovered a "significant" portion of the ceiling in Room 4 of Panel 7 had fallen, a news release said.

Although workers were nearby, entry to Room 4 had been prohibited more than a month ago due to accelerated salt movement prior to the rock fall, WIPP recovery spokesman Tim Runyon said.

"Safety of the workers is and will always be our highest priority," said Phil Breidenbach, Nuclear Waste Partnership president and project manager, in the news release. "The fact that the rock fall occurred in a prohibited area where people are not allowed is evidence that our program is working to protect the workers."

Panel 7 remains contaminated due to a radiological release created when a drum containing waste ruptured in February 2014.

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Demolition begins on Hanford plutonium plant

The Olympian

November 2, 2016

[More info here](#)

November 2016

14-15

DOE-EM Site Specific
Advisory Board
Meeting in
Aiken, SC

[More info here](#)

November 2016

16

INVITATION ONLY

Annual ECA Board
Meeting and
Elections in New
Orleans, LA

November 2016

16

INVITATION ONLY



RICHLAND, WASH.--The demolition of a major plutonium plant at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington state is underway.

Crews started tearing down the Plutonium Reclamation Facility on Tuesday. The demolition comes after 20

years of work to clean out the entire Plutonium Finishing Plant, which is one of Hanford's most hazardous buildings, The Tri-City Herald [reported](#) Wednesday.

The plant operated from 1948 to 1989, processing nearly two-thirds of the nation's plutonium.

Project Director Tom Teynor says crews are monitoring for radiation during demolition to maintain safety.

"This plant is one of the most hazardous buildings at Hanford, and its demolition will be a major watershed in the Hanford cleanup," said Alex Smith, nuclear waste program manager for the state Department of Ecology, the regulator on the project.

Department of Energy officials have called the plant the largest and most complex plutonium facility in the nationwide DOE weapons complex.

The Plutonium Finishing Plant for decades made hockey puck-sized tablets of plutonium for the nation's nuclear arsenal.

Work to prepare the plant for demolition started with stabilization of plutonium left in the plant in a liquid solution at the end of the Cold War. More recent work has included cleaning out and dismantling highly contaminated equipment.

The main area of the plant covers 200,000 square feet and stands three stories tall.

Consent-Based Siting and Nuclear Waste Management Priorities Meeting in New Orleans, LA

November 2016

16-18

INVITATION ONLY

2016
Intergovernmental Meeting with DOE in New Orleans, LA

February 2017

23-24

INVITATION ONLY

ECA Peer Exchange in Washington, DC

March 2017

5-9

Demolition should be completed about July 2017, ending with an explosion to bring down the plant's ventilation stack.

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No total Hanford cleanup cost to be released in 2017

Tri-City Herald

November 2, 2016



Hanford regulators are giving the Department of Energy a pass this coming year on figuring the remaining cost and schedule for Hanford cleanup through 2090.

The last lifecycle report released by DOE put the estimated cost for remaining environmental cleanup of the Hanford nuclear reservation at \$107.7 billion. The estimate covers cleanup that would be largely completed by 2060, plus some post-cleanup oversight.

DOE is required by the legally binding Tri-Party Agreement to prepare a Lifecycle Scope, Schedule and Cost Report annually. The requirement is among concessions DOE made to get tank farm and vitrification plant schedules extended under the 2010 consent decree filed in federal court.

There have been so many recent changes to Hanford work plans, along with deadline changes and extensions, that DOE and its regulators, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Washington State Department of Ecology, have agreed that the next report should be skipped. The Tri-Party Agreement has been amended to reflect the change.

The 2017 report was due Jan. 31, 2017.

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**Waste Management
Conference in
Phoenix, AZ**

[More info here](#)

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What to know about Idaho National Lab's research on nuclear power, cybersecurity

Idaho Statesman

November 5, 2016



Nuclear energy provides 19 percent of our nation's electricity, but 63 percent of its carbon-free electricity. If we are serious about combating climate change, nuclear energy and its ability to provide clean, base-load electricity must be an even bigger part of the nation's energy

portfolio.

The Idaho National Laboratory is the lead national lab on President Barack Obama's Gateway for Accelerated Innovation in Nuclear Initiative. INL researchers are continuing efforts to extend the lives of existing reactors, while helping industry develop the next generation of reactors.

INL has assisted NuScale Power's efforts to develop the world's first small modular reactor, which could begin producing power for cities in seven Western states as soon as 2024. That one reactor, potentially located on 35 acres in the Idaho desert, may render obsolete three coal plants that provide nearly 60 percent of the power to cities within the Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems.

INL also is working to address the spent fuel produced by reactors. Idaho Attorney General Lawrence Wasden and the Department of Energy are working to find common ground and import research quantities of commercial spent fuel to the lab for critical testing.

While INL is best known for nuclear energy research, it's also important to understand that the lab's clean-energy focus is diverse: INL researchers help

farmers convert waste products to electricity; conduct vital testing on plug-in electric vehicles and charging stations; and do the science necessary to integrate renewables such as wind and solar onto power grids.

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