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Nevada Site Office Environmental Management

EM NEWS FLASH



Pahrump Students Experience the Nevada Test Site—Past and Present

Sixth graders in Pahrump, Nevada recently got a lesson on the [Nevada Test Site](#) and what made this part of the Nevada desert known throughout the world. On May 19th and 20th, 2010, the public involvement team from the U.S. Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration Nevada Site Office (NNSA/NSO) visited Rosemary Clarke Middle School to offer students a glimpse of the site's colorful history as well as talk about present-day efforts to restore the environment.

Students listened eagerly as they learned about the tense nuclear arms race that played out after World War II, and how hundreds of nuclear tests were performed on the Nevada Test Site until a testing ban came into effect in 1992. The public involvement team also explained current projects that are addressing the environmental impacts of all these years of testing.



Students complete an Operation Clean Desert activity book following a presentation and poster session.

“These kids need to hear about a history that is so close to them,” said sixth grade teacher Carol Hunn. The southern boundary of the Nevada Test Site lies just 40 miles away from Pahrump. According to Hunn, understanding activities at the Nevada Test Site can provide a bridge for these students, many of whom have relatives and friends who work at the test site.

Classes were treated to a presentation with historic film clips before rotating through a series of displays. As in years past, the biggest crowd pleaser proved to be the interactive [Operation Clean Desert](#) display, wherein Dr. Proton and Adam the Atom teach students about the effects of radiation on soil and water at the Nevada Test Site. These characters also star in the computer game the sixth graders were given to take home.



Students learn about past and current activities conducted at the Nevada Test Site.

While students were curious about past activities at the Nevada Test Site, discussion also steered toward the future of the site--a future that includes continued cleanup, conventional weapons testing, waste disposal, monitoring, and alternative energy projects.

Kids were eager to talk about their own futures as well. Many plan to attend college after high school and pursue professional careers in subjects ranging from medicine, physics, mechanical engineering, and computer programming.

“It really opened many of their eyes as to possibilities that exist for them and why their grades and assignments are important,” added Hunn.

For more information or to schedule a guest speaker, please contact envmgt@nv.doe.gov, call 702-295-3521, or go to <http://www.nv.energy.gov/about/community/speakers.aspx>.

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