



Special Nuclear Material Removed from Hanford's Plutonium Finishing Plant

December 2009



The Department of Energy (DOE) and CH2M HILL Plateau Remediation Company have finished moving special nuclear material containing plutonium out of the Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP), marking an historic milestone in the cleanup of the Hanford Site in southeast Washington state.

From 1949-1989, the plant produced plutonium oxides and metals. Hanford produced nearly two-thirds of the plutonium used in the country's nuclear weapons program. The end of the Cold War left PFP with a daunting inventory of plutonium-bearing material – nearly 20 tons in over 8,000 containers.

By 2004, the leftover material had been stabilized and repackaged. Some of it was waste, and the rest of the material was placed in about 2,300 containers for shipment to South Carolina's Savannah River Site. These shipments were completed by May 2009. By November 2009, a small amount of nuclear reactor fuel stored at the plant was shipped to the Savannah River Site and a secure storage facility at Hanford.

With the Special Nuclear Material out of the plant, workers are now focusing their efforts on decontamination and decommissioning. Hundreds of pieces of equipment are being decontaminated and removed, and all of the buildings will be demolished by a Tri-Party Agreement milestone of 2016.

- 1949-1989** Plutonium oxides and metals produced at PFP
- 1990-2004** Plutonium stabilized and repackaged; and disposal of residues
- 2009** Removal of Special Nuclear Material completed
- 2012** Decontamination and decommissioning of PFP facilities completed
- 2013** Complete demolition of PFP to slab on grade

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