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News Release

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K-65 Waste Removed from Concrete Silos

CINCINNATI - Fluor Fernald, the contractor responsible for cleaning up the 1,050-acre former uranium production plant for the Department of Energy (DOE) has completed the transfer of radium bearing radioactive waste from two, 50-year-old concrete silos into four 750,000-gallon steel holding tanks. Workers will now begin to peel away the earthen berm that surrounded the aging silos prior to beginning demolition. The waste extraction process started in late September 2004 and took approximately five months to complete. The removal of waste from the silos marks an important step that will ultimately allow workers to begin safely treating, packaging and shipping the waste off site. The K-65 waste residues were produced from the extraction of uranium from high-grade ores mined in the Belgian Congo and have been stored at Fernald since the early 50's.

Having hydraulically moved the waste from the silos and into the storage tanks, the next step will be to pump the waste to the nearby Silos 1 and 2 Remediation Facility. Here waste will be mixed with flyash and cement to form a cement-like grout. The grout will then be loaded into 4,000 pound, 1/2-inch thick cylindrical carbon steel containers measuring 6-feet in diameter and 6 1/2-feet high. A loaded container will weigh 21,000 pounds and contain a blend of 20 percent waste and 80 percent flyash/cement.

Construction of the transfer tank facility was complete in August 2004. At one point the Silos Project had over 800 Building Trades craft working in one of the three projects associated with Silos making Fernald the largest construction project in the tri-state area.

Transferring the waste from the storage tanks to the processing facility will be handled remotely from a control room within the Silos 1 and 2 Remediation Facility. Here chemical operators will use over 80 cameras to view all phases of the operation. They are also operating a Radon Control System, which serves to reduce radon levels by over 98 percent.

Silos 1 and 2 waste treatment operations are expected to begin in April and take 9 – 11 months to complete. In all up to 7,000 containers of waste will be loaded requiring 3,500 trucks. Once off-site shipments are complete, demolition crews will remove the remediation facility and support structures. The safe and successful removal of Silo 1 and 2 waste is a critical part of the DOE plan to cleanup the Fernald site and transition the property to back to a useful purpose for the community.

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