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United States Government

Department of Energy

# memorandum

Ohio Field Office  
West Valley Demonstration Project

DATE: December 14, 1999

SUBJECT: Weekly Activities Report

TO: Mark E. Rawlings, Team Leader  
West Valley Demonstration Project  
DOE-HQ, EM-31, 1188/CLOV

Attached is a copy of the West Valley Demonstration Project Weekly Activities Report (Predecisional Draft), dated December 14, 1999.

Please advise me if we can provide any further information.



Barbara A. Mazurowski, Director  
West Valley Demonstration Project

## Attachment

cc: J. D. Parrott, NRC-HQ  
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**WEEKLY ACTIVITIES REPORT**  
**WEST VALLEY DEMONSTRATION PROJECT**  
**December 14, 1999**  
**CURRENT ACTIVITIES**

### **HIGH-LEVEL WASTE PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

#### **High-Level Waste Transfer Activities**

- Progress continues towards high-level waste (HLW) tank heel removal. Completed work this past week included: liquid processing from Tank 8D-1 through the Supernatant Treatment System (STS) to the Liquid Waste Treatment System (LWTS) evaporator, evaporator processing in the LWTS for volume reduction; and transfer of liquids from the Concentrator Feed Makeup Tank (CFMT) to the Melter Feed Holding Tank (MFHT).
- The Melter Feed Holding Tank (MFHT), which normally runs under a negative pressure has developed a slight positive pressure. Troubleshooting of this situation has identified a problem with the MFHT demister and corrective actions are underway.
- Scheduled activities next week include Supernatant Treatment System (STS) Processing and Evaporator Processing in the Liquid Waste Treatment System (LWTS). Under the Vitrification Expended Materials Processing (VEMP) system, activities are scheduled for transfer of four items of expended material from the Chemical Processing Cell (CPC) through the Equipment Decontamination Room (EDR) to the Vitrification Cell. Last week the success of the VEMP system was demonstrated when a container of size-reduced material (sections not contaminated with high-level waste) with a contact dose rate of 6 mr/hr was brought out of the cell and stored on site as low-level waste.
- The melter is currently in idle with the 243rd canister, the second in fiscal year 2000 under the melter feed pour spout. Melter feeding and pouring resumed on December 9, 1999, and was stopped on December 10, 1999, due to the Melter Feed Holding Tank (MFHT) demister problem. Melter feed operations will resume following corrective actions.

### **PROJECT COMPLETION**

- The procedure for the removal of the first two pieces of cold side glass from the General Purpose Cell (GPC) B window is in review. The current plan is for Hot Cells Services to stage the necessary equipment for the GPC B window work prior to the Christmas holidays and return after the first of the year to perform the work.
- PaR Systems was released to begin procurement of the commercial off-the-shelf items and catalog items for the Bridge Mounted Manipulator Systems.
- Dames and Moore has initiated the criticality analysis for the Head End Cells activities.

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- During Caustic and Nitric Pad demolition, higher than expected contamination was found in the soil after removing the south berm. Radiation Protection is performing additional radiological surveys of the area. Because of the higher soil contamination levels, the removal methodology for the pedestals will be revised. Waste handling and disposition methods for the soil and concrete are also being reviewed based on this new information.

### ENVIRONMENTAL, SAFETY, AND HEALTH

- The U.S. Department of Energy Office of Enforcement and Investigation (EH-10) has issued a Preliminary Notice of Violation to West Valley Nuclear Services Company for violations of nuclear safety requirements. The violations are associated with the August 10, 1999, event in the Vitrification Facility. Although there were no radiological exposures to workers, EH-10 expressed concern with the multiple failures in formality of operations which led to the event, and the fact that many of the deficiencies were known to exist prior to the event. No civil penalty was imposed as a result of the violations.

### WASTE MANAGEMENT

- In support of the Lag Storage Area (LSA) 4 Shipping Depot, the contractor finished the foundation walls, rerouted the fuel gas line around the depot foundation, installed the depot foundation insulation, and began excavation for the connector west foundation last week. This week, the contractor will tie-in and test new gas line, complete backfilling inside and outside the depot foundation walls, place the depot east slab, and excavate and place the connector west foundation footer and wall.

### PROJECT OR PROGRAM SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

#### Spent Nuclear Fuel Program

- A technical meeting with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to discuss structural, criticality, and containment analyses for full loads including damaged fuel, is scheduled for December 16, 1999.
- The Buffalo and Pittsburgh (B&P) Railroad has replaced ties between Machias and Ashford Junction. Rail tie replacement from Ashford Junction to the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) spur is in progress. Work is in progress on refurbishment of the 1.8 mile spur.
- Han-Tek personnel are on site to complete modifications to the 100-ton crane for planned engineered lifts of up to full load. The crane hook has been removed and a new hook is scheduled to be installed this week.

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Remote Handled Waste Facility

- o The Quality Assurance plan for the design and construction of the Remote Handled Waste Facility has been conditionally approved.
- o The Design and Operability review report, a key deliverable requiring approval prior to start of preliminary design of the Remote Handled Waste Facility, is being revised to incorporate comments and is scheduled to be submitted for approval by December 15, 1999.
- o The West Valley Nuclear Services Company Radiation and Safety Committee (R&SC) completed their review of the Remote Handled Waste Facility Preliminary Safety Analysis Report (PSAR). Resolution of all R&SC comments was obtained on December 9, 1999, and the PSAR was approved. The PSAR is currently being prepared for transmittal to the U.S. Department of Energy for a joint Ohio Field Office and Ohio Field Office West Valley Demonstration Project review.

Site Support

- o The proposal for soil borings and instrumentation installation in determination of Lake No. 1 Dam stability has been received and is currently undergoing evaluation. Movement monitoring points, which were previously installed on the Dam face, have been surveyed.
- o Final walkdown of the water and clarifier tanks painting project was completed last week. The subcontractor has completed painting the first forty-foot section of the Lake 2 pump house access bridge and is planning on moving the scaffolding to the last forty-foot section next week. Handrails and miscellaneous items will be painted last. If the weather holds, the site painting work is expected to be completed in two weeks.
- o All of the utilities to utility room Compressor 31K-1A have been disconnected and the dismantling of this compressor began on December 13, 1999. The removal of the antiquated compressor will provide the needed space for installation of a more efficient site condensate system.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

- o On November 30, 1999, the Citizens Task Force (CTF) met to begin discussing their comments on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) draft Policy Statement on Decontamination and Decommissioning Criteria for the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP). NRC's public release for comment of this draft Policy Statement took place on December 3, 1999. The comment period will be 60 days. During this comment period, NRC is planning to conduct a public meeting at the WVDP to discuss the Policy Statement and solicit additional comments. This public meeting is planned for January 5, 2000, at the Ashford Office Complex.

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- The next Citizens Task Force (CTF) meeting is a conference call planned for December 16, 1999, to discuss additional CTF comments on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Policy Statement.

**MEETINGS/TRIPS**

- Several meetings related to technology deployment were held recently at the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP). On November 30, 1999, Project personnel met with representatives of EM-50, Decontamination and Decommissioning (D&D) Focus Area, to discuss technology accomplishments and needs for the WVDP, and to discuss possible mechanisms for additional funding. A meeting to discuss progress on high-level waste (HLW) sampling and technology needs in future years was held December 2, 1999, with representatives of EM-50, Tanks Focus Area. Another series of meetings was held with the Tanks Focus Area and Florida International University on December 8, 1999, to discuss size reduction, HLW tank closure, and decontamination of HLW canisters.
- A West Valley Demonstration Project quarterly public meeting is scheduled for December 21, 1999. Topics include a Project update, spent nuclear fuel shipping, the Remote Handled Waste Facility, and the High-Level Waste Record of Decision.