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West Valley Demonstration Project Begins Vitrification Facility Demolition

West Valley, NY, [September 12, 2017] –Workers for CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley, LLC (CHBWV) have begun demolition of the Vitrification Facility, a 10,700 square foot reinforced concrete structure at the West Valley Demonstration Project. The facility was previously used to vitrify high-level radioactive waste into glass. The waste resulted from spent fuel reprocessing at the Western New York Nuclear Service Center, where a Department of Energy-led cleanup of the site is being conducted in cooperation with the site’s owner, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority.

Extensive preparations were completed inside the facility prior to commencement of demolition, including removing vitrification process components, piping and hazardous materials; performing surface decontamination; isolating mechanical and electrical systems; and sealing penetrations to prevent contamination migration during demolition. The demolition plan and safety precautions were extensively reviewed prior to receiving approval to proceed with demolition.

The facility is being demolished using heavy equipment according to a controlled work plan. Debris is being loaded into waste containers soon after it is generated to minimize debris piles, and is being shipped offsite to a federal low-level waste disposal facility.

“The start of demolition is a significant accomplishment for the CHBWV Team and the US Department of Energy,” said Bryan Bower, DOE-WVDP Director. “The WVDP is the first site in the DOE complex to design, construct, operate, shut down – and now demolish – a vitrification facility.” Bower noted the WVDP workforce’s vitrification experience has proven a valuable asset for DOE, which operates another vitrification facility at the Department’s Savannah River Site in South Carolina. “Some of the very people that helped construct and operate the Vitrification Facility are now supporting its demolition,” Bower said.

Demolition began on September 11, 2017, with removal of exterior wall segments on the east and west sides of the structure. Demolition will proceed toward the center of the building, where the vitrification process cell is located. Demolition and waste disposal is expected to take place through the spring of 2018.

The WVDP is an environmental cleanup and waste management project located about 35 miles south of Buffalo. The Project is conducted by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) in cooperation with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley, LLC (CHBWV) manages and operates the WVDP under contract to DOE. The CHBWV team is comprised of CH2M HILL, BWX Technologies, Inc. (BWXT) and the Environmental Chemical Corporation (ECC).

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