

# OLEAN TIMES HERALD

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## Largest tank removed from West Valley nuclear waste site



A crew from CHBWV, the contractor in the cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project, removes a 20-ton tank that once held high-level waste from the Main Plant Process Building. It was the first and largest of nine tanks being removed from a liquid waste cell of the building being demolished.

**WEST VALLEY** — The largest of nine tanks from a liquid waste cell at the Main Plant Process Building at the **West Valley Demonstration Project** has been removed.

The 20-ton tank was recently removed by the cleanup contractor, **CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV)**, as part of the demolition of the Main Plant Process Building, one of the few original structures remaining at the **West Valley Demonstration Project**.

The tanks were used to collect liquid waste from past radioactive fuel reprocessing operations, and later, high-level waste vitrification processes that mixed high-level liquid radioactive waste with glass.

There are 275 10-foot tall stainless steel containers with the liquid waste encased in glass stored in concrete casks at the site. The casks are being held in place in the wait for a national repository for the waste.

The large tank that was removed from the facility under demolition was the main waste collection tank where acidic liquids were neutralized before the waste liquid was transferred through the system,

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according to a statement from the Department of Energy, which oversees the site with the **New York State Energy Research and Development Authority**.

The team will remove the remaining eight tanks as part of the cleanup project.

Crews with **CHBWV** used an excavator with a hydraulic hammer to remove concrete and steel around the 40,000-pound tank for its safe removal.

Prior to the start of this work, they deactivated and stabilized all nine tanks with grout or foam to control any residual contamination at its source.

“Safety comes down to planning, preparation and robust controls,” said Stephen Bousquet, the EM **West Valley** assistant director of project management. “Our team understands the importance of performing work in a deliberate and methodical manner, especially when it involves challenging high-risk work while protecting our workforce, the public and the environment.”

The Main Plant is one of the last major facilities at DOE’s **West Valley** cleanup site. Its full demolition will further reduce environmental risks and position the nuclear waste site for the next cleanup phase.

“Having the right people, equipment and processes in place is how our team continues to leverage their combined knowledge and expertise to safely complete our cleanup mission,” **CHBWV** President and General Manager Jason Casper said. “I’m proud of the team’s accomplishment and the work they continue to do on this project.”

The Main Plant demolition is expected to be completed in the next fiscal year that starts this October.

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