

March 25, 2024

## Panel highlights WVDP at international conference



West Valley Demonstration Project representatives conducted a panel discussion at this year's Waste Management Symposia. Pictured: (from left) Corey Chun, CFO/Business Manager; Kelly Wooley, Deputy General Manager; Stephen Bousquet, Assistant Director of the EM West Valley Office of Project Management; Tom Dogal, Facility Disposition Manager; Darren Boone, Environmental, Safety, Health & Quality Manager; and Peggy Loop, Waste and Site Operations Manager.

**WEST VALLEY** — **West Valley Demonstration Project** representatives from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and **CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley**, DOE's prime contractor, conducted a panel discussion at this year's Waste Management Symposia in Phoenix, Ariz.

Held March 11-14, the Waste Management Symposia is the premier international conference for radioactive waste management and related topics. This year marked its 50th anniversary, which drew a record attendance of more than 3,300 attendees.

The panel, which featured five subject matter experts from DOE and **CHBWV**, discussed the many activities that took place before the start of its main project, the deconstruction of the Main Plant Process Building.

For more than two decades, workers reduced radioactivity by more than 98% through the removal of more than seven miles of piping and 50 tons of equipment and debris. Workers also removed 56,000 pounds of asbestos-containing material.

Topics of discussion included deactivation and decommissioning activities and lessons learned/best practices and readiness activities that have been applied to the Main Plant deconstruction project. The panel also detailed how planning, which started in 2015, was successful because of teamwork, partnering, applying lessons learned from other projects and

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rigorous conduct of operations preparation including the use of subject matter experts from its corporate partners.

Stephen Bousquet, assistant director of the **EM West Valley Office** of Project Management, opened the panel discussion with a brief history of **West Valley** and how it is different than other DOE sites across the complex.

Unlike other sites, **West Valley** is not associated with the Cold War. Instead, New York state became interested in the Atomic Energy Commission's reprocessing program in the 1950s to promote industrial development within the state.

Before turning the presentation over to the next presenter, Bousquet said, "The primary importance in **West Valley's** cleanup mission is the men and women in the field who implement the work plans and deliver projects to completion in a safe and compliant manner. We are here today because of their dedication, commitment, and perseverance."

Bousquet was joined by **CHBWV** subject matter experts Kelly Wooley, Deputy General Manager; Tom Dogal, **CHBWV** Facility Disposition Manager; Peggy Loop, **CHBWV** Waste and Site Operations Manager; and Darren Boone, **CHBWV** Environmental, Safety, Health & Quality Manager.

Together, they covered a variety of topics associated with the safe and compliant deconstruction of the Main Plant Process Building and what it takes to protect the health and safety of employees, the public and the environment.

"This team has proven that difficult, high-hazard work can be completed safely," said Wooley. "That is no surprise considering this same workforce was one of the first in the DOE-EM complex to achieve VPP Star of Excellence status, an award bestowed upon the safest of the safe DOE sites."

The panel highlighted that the deconstruction continues to be safe and compliant even in challenging weather conditions. There have been no lost time injuries, no unplanned radiological releases and no environmental issues. Deconstruction is more than 50% complete and is expected to be done in fiscal year 2025.

The session ended with a question-and-answer period with approximately 60 participants.

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