

# SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL

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## West Valley Demonstration Project sends equipment to Idaho for reuse, saving taxpayers \$1 million



Crews shipped two telemanipulators packaged in a wooden crate along with other parts from the **West Valley Demonstration Project** to the Idaho National Laboratory Site. The specialized equipment is used to safely handle hazardous materials remotely for processing and packaging.

**WEST VALLEY** – Two U.S. Department of Energy Office of Environmental Management cleanup sites are expected to save taxpayers an estimated \$1 million by sharing highly specialized equipment.

The **West Valley Demonstration Project** transferred the equipment to the Idaho National Laboratory Site. The equipment is used to handle hazardous materials remotely, ensuring safety as crews process and package the materials.

“Repurposing highly specialized equipment like this helps save money for taxpayers and the government,” **West Valley** Project Management Office Assistant Director Stephen Bousquet said. “It also saves cost on schedule because the equipment is already built and available for immediate use.”

EM’s INL Site cleanup contractor Idaho Environmental Coalition will receive major components and spare parts from **West Valley** for several robotic manipulator arms used alongside telemanipulators to

# JOURNAL

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process waste. Telemanipulators allow an operator to control a hand-like mechanism from outside a working cell – similar to claw crane machine arcade games.

That equipment is among a large inventory of parts used to maintain and replace remote-handling equipment no longer needed at **West Valley** after crews there decommissioned the Main Plant Process Building and Vitrification Facility. The site had used the remote-handling equipment to process and reduce the size of radioactive materials and package them remotely. The site continues to perform this work using a different model.

Royce Tyler, an IEC Waste Management system engineer, said it was remarkable to find the robotic manipulator parts and telemanipulators in the DOE complex through DOE's excess property program.

"Idaho has an ongoing need for both parts in its cleanup mission and will certainly put these resources to good use at the Idaho Cleanup Project," Tyler said.

Jason Casper, president of **West Valley** cleanup contractor **CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley**, said sharing equipment between sites is a formula for success.

"**West Valley** and other DOE sites will continue to assist each other in reducing risks in a safe, cost-effective and environmentally compliant manner," Casper said.

Several years ago, **West Valley** transferred a 12.5-ton tow tractor, 47-ton vertical cask transporter and robotically operated welder to other sites and received three used heavy-duty excavators.

-Springville Journal Staff