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News from UCOR

Safely Delivering the U.S. Department of Energy's Vision for the East Tennessee Technology Park Mission

For Immediate Release

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UCOR Cuts Through K-25 East Wing, Proceeds with Demolition

Oak Ridge, Tenn., August 31, 2011 – URS | CH2M Oak Ridge (UCOR) had a literal breakthrough this week when workers completed a cut through the east wing of the K-25 Building, segregating the north 16 sections of the structure from the six southernmost sections, five of which are contaminated with Technetium-99 (Tc-99).

The sections containing Tc-99, a slow-decaying radioactive metal, will require additional preparation before demolition. The cut removed two sections of the building adjacent to a buffer zone that had been established next to the five Tc-99 sections.

Crews will begin demolishing the remaining 16 sections while preparing the Tc-99 sections for demolition.

“This is an important milestone,” said Leo Sain, UCOR President and Project Manager. “It enables us to continue demolition simultaneously with the preparation work in the Tc-99 units.” Prior to cutting the building in two, the preparation work could not be accomplished while demolition was taking place for safety reasons. “Now that the sections are not connected, work can go on in both areas at the same time,” Sain said.

Once the nearly half-mile east wing is demolished, about three-fourths of the once massive K-25 Building will have been removed. The west wing was demolished previously.

The facility was built as part of the WWII Manhattan Project to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons and subsequently nuclear power. When it was built, it was the largest structure in the world under one roof, covering more than 40 acres. The K-25 Building was shut down in the early 1960s, while uranium enrichment continued at the site, now known as the East Tennessee Technology Park Heritage Center, until the mid-1980s.

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Photo cutline:

Workers finish cutting through the east wing of the K-25 Building at East Tennessee Technology Park Heritage Center to separate the wing into two sections. The portion of the wing to the left will require additional preparation before demolition, while demolition will continue on the larger portion to the right. (View is from east to west.)



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