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

For Immediate Release

Media contact: Dennis Hill
dennis.hill@ettp.doe.gov
(865) 241-4690

UCOR Begins Shipping Soils from Around ORNL Liquid Waste Tank

Oak Ridge, Tenn., October 7, 2011 – URS | CH2M Oak Ridge (UCOR) today began offsite shipments of soils excavated from around an underground waste tank located at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). This removal action is being performed under the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and will eliminate a known source of contaminants being released to the groundwater.

“We are proud to be a part of the solution to what has been an ongoing problem for several years,” said UCOR President and Project Manager Leo Sain. “Removal of these soils and this tank will eliminate a source of groundwater contamination at ORNL,”

The action includes excavation of Tank W-1A and approximately 355 cubic yards of soil and associated secondary waste. The soils are being packaged in lead-lined boxes and shipped off-site for disposal.

Non-destructive assay results show the highest concentrations of contaminants are ¹³⁷Cesium, ²⁴¹Americium, ^{239/240 & 241}Plutonium, ⁹⁰Strontium, and ^{233 & 234}Uranium.

Tank W-1A was commissioned in 1951 to collect and store liquid wastes from radiochemical separations and high-radiation analytical facilities at ORNL. During its operation, a transfer line to the tank was suspected of leaking near the tank intake, causing significant soil and groundwater contamination in the vicinity of the tank. It was emptied and removed from service in 1986 after the leak was discovered.

The 7.5-foot diameter by 13.5-foot-long 4,000-gallon stainless steel tank was installed horizontally on top of a concrete foundation pad with two concrete saddles. It weighs approximately 6,500 lbs, and is buried about 10 feet below ground surface. Once removed, the tank will be packaged and shipped to a commercial facility at the East Tennessee Technology Park for size reduction and repackaging, then shipped off site for disposal.

After the contaminated soils and tank are removed and the concrete saddles and pad are broken up into rubble the excavation site will be backfilled.

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Completion of the tank removal and backfill is planned for late 2011 with demobilization by mid March 2012. The \$37.7 million project is being funded by the Department of Energy under CERCLA. Decommissioning and Environmental Management Company (DEMCO) is UCOR's excavation subcontractor on the project.

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UCOR NR 5: 10/7/11