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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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Water tower at East Tennessee Technology Park demolished

Oak Ridge, Tenn., Aug. 3, 2013 – One of the most iconic structures at East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP)—the checkerboard water tower that has dominated the site’s skyline for 55 years—has been demolished.

URS | CH2M Oak Ridge LLC (UCOR), along with its subcontracting partners, brought down the 382-ft-tall tower Saturday through a controlled explosive demolition that sent the structure toppling into an empty field.

Officially called the K-1206-F Fire Water Tower, the 400,000-gallon structure was designed and built by the Chicago Bridge and Iron Company in 1958 to service the site’s fire protection system. It operated until June 3, when the valves were turned off. It was drained, disconnected, and permanently taken out of service on July 15.

With the tower gone, the site will rely on pumping stations to provide the necessary pressure for its fire water system. The system will eventually be turned over to the city of Oak Ridge, another step in DOE’s overall strategy of converting ETTP into a private sector industrial park.

“Removing this water tower is a significant—and very visible—step in cleaning up ETTP,” said Jim Kopotic, Oak Ridge Office of Environmental Management’s Federal Project Director for the East Tennessee Technology Park. “Many people have worked countless hours to safely bring down this historic tower, which was one of the most visible and identifiable structures at the site. This demolition marks another major advancement in the transformation of ETTP.”

Through the years, the tower had deteriorated. An engineering evaluation was conducted in 1994 to assess its overall condition. It was eventually added to the list of structures at ETTP—the former Oak Ridge Gaseous Diffusion Plant—that would be demolished. Although not originally schedule to be demolished this year, UCOR and DOE accelerated the schedule for demolition because of the tower’s continuing deterioration.

“The skyline at ETTP is forever changed with the demolition of the water tower,” said Bob Smith, Technical Services and Site Support Projects Manager. “We are pleased that we were able to safely and expeditiously bring down this massive structure, accomplishing another major cleanup milestone at the site. This demolition project is emblematic of the cleanup and reindustrialization of the ETTP site.”

The water tower is estimated to contain at least 1.5 million pounds of steel, which is being characterized and sampled in preparation for recycling. Any steel that cannot be recycled will go to the Y-12 Sanitary Landfill for disposal.

The project was a team effort involving DOE, UCOR, and UCOR's subcontractors—Veterans Contracting Solutions Group LLC and Controlled Demolition Inc.



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