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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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Highest Risk Components Safely Removed From K-27

Oak Ridge, Tenn., Feb. 26, 2013 – URS | CH2M Oak Ridge, LLC (UCOR) has removed the highest risk components remaining in the East Tennessee Technology Park's (ETTP) K-27 building, with the successful crane removal of six components known as NaF traps.

The K-27 building is sister to the mile-long K-25 gaseous diffusion process building, which is now nearly demolished. Both are Manhattan Project buildings constructed to produce materials for nuclear weapons. As work is completed at K-25, crews shift to K-27, where their experience and lessons learned are crucial.

When K-25 and K-27 were operational, the NaF traps were part of the final uranium removal process from the "purge cascade." Sodium fluoride pellets were used to trap the uranium, and these particular traps still contain uranium materials from when the facility was shut down decades ago. The NaF traps are each about the size of a household hot water heater and range in weight from 1,500 pounds to 2,000 pounds each.

The two NaF traps deemed highest risk were removed first, over the weekend. According to Dell Simpson, Project Integration Manager for the K-27 project, these were high risk because of the amount of uranium still remaining in them. They are being stored in the K-25 area until the materials can be removed. The other four NaF traps were removed on Monday, Feb. 25. These can be disposed of as waste, Simpson said.

"It's a big accomplishment to remove these vessels," said Steve Dahlgren, UCOR D&D Manager. "They represented the highest risk remaining in the K-27 building. Safely removing them is a big step toward getting this project completed."

In addition to deactivating and demolishing the K-25 Building, UCOR is responsible for other specific scopes of work at ETTP, the Y-12 National Security Complex, and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

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NaF trap practice: Workers practice lifting a dummy NaF trap as part of preparation for the actual job. Pictured are crane operator Chester Sheldon, and riggers Michael Shirks (left) and Larry Leonard.



NaF trap being removed: Ernie Gunter (left) and Michael Shirks watch as a NaF trip is lifted through the roof of K-27.