

Cleaning Up the Idaho Site: U.S. Department of Energy Performance to Date

Over the years, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has accomplished many of its legally-enforceable milestones governing cleanup and the management and disposal of radioactive and hazardous wastes at DOE's Idaho Site on time or ahead of schedule. DOE and its contractors have met 800 of 804 enforceable milestones on time over the past 20 years. Some of the milestones that were not completed according to the initially agreed-upon schedule were changed in agreement with the regulators to be completed at a later date. The most important cleanup accomplishments to date include:

- Digging up over 11,930 cubic meters of hazardous or radioactive targeted waste materials that have been packaged into more than 5,500 drums (1,144 cubic meters) and removing 223,000 pounds of hazardous vapors from the burial ground located above the Snake River Plain Aquifer,
- Shipping over 23,000 cubic meters of plutonium-contaminated waste out of Idaho to DOE's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico for permanent disposal. Idaho made the first shipment to WIPP when it opened in 1999 and remains the No. 1 shipper of waste to the repository, and
- Removing the waste from and closing seven, 300,000-gallon and four, 30,000-gallon radioactive liquid waste tanks located above the aquifer. A treatment plant that will process the remaining 900,000 gallons of liquid radioactive waste from the final four waste tanks still in use is currently under construction and will enable these tanks to be cleaned and closed by the 2012 deadline.

"The Department's aggressive approach to cleanup in Idaho has yielded tremendous results," said DOE Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management James A. Rispoli. "Working hand-in-hand with the State of Idaho and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), we have achieved our mutual goals of being responsible stewards of the environment and safely and effectively cleaning up our Idaho site. We look forward to working with the State and EPA to complete the buried waste cleanup."

For more information visit us on the Web at www.id.doe.gov
Or visit the Idaho Cleanup Project at www.idahocleanupproject.com