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Electrical Switchyard Towers Begin to Topple at DOE's Piketon Plant

PIKETON, OHIO – Nearly 80 steel towers have been removed to date as part of demolition of a massive electrical switchyard complex at the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon, Ohio.

The switchyard complex encompasses 18-acres and was one of two large on-site switchyards used to provide as much as 2200 megawatts of electrical power daily for uranium enrichment processing during full operations. This was enough power to light up New York City at the time the plant was built in the early 1950s. Uranium enrichment production ended at the plant in 2001. The second switchyard is still in use today to provide power for the remainder of the site.

The X-533 switchyard, built in 1954-1955, was de-energized in November 2008 to prepare for decontamination and decommissioning (D&D). The project is one of five projects being funded at the Portsmouth Site under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Demolition of the switchyard began in mid-February 2010 and is scheduled for completion by January 2011. DOE's environmental remediation contractor, LATA/Parallax Portsmouth, LLC, is working to finish the project several months earlier.

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Pictured above is an aerial view of the X-533 Electrical Switchyard, prior to commencement of demolition activities in mid-February 2010 at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in southern Ohio.



Photo below shows heavy equipment operators working in unison to dismantle the electrical towers of the X-533 Switchyard. Work began in the middle of the switchyard, as shown at left, to remove 40 ft tall towers; some of the electrical towers are 120 ft high.



Below, scrap metal begins to pile up on the north end of the X-533 Switchyard Complex from demolition activities.

