

ARRA workers save money, time at DOE's Paducah Site

PADUCAH, KY – Having saved millions of dollars cleaning up and tearing down an old smelter, DOE and its remediation contractor, under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act are moving ahead to eliminate other closed facilities at the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Paducah Site.

With the East End Smelter gone – about a year ahead of schedule and \$10 million under budget – these savings are being reinvested to further accelerate existing Recovery Act projects at the site.

Recovery Act workers are placing greater emphasis on cleaning up C-410/420, known as the Feed Plant. The complex operated from 1957 to 1977 where uranium hexafluoride and fluorine were manufactured.

“We saved money on the smelter project by executing work more efficiently and with smaller crews,” said Rob Seifert, DOE's Recovery Act Project Manager at the Paducah Site. “We plan to do the same with the Feed Plant.”

Workers trained and experienced with other facility-removal work will help move Feed Plant work along, he said.

Maintenance mechanic Jason Cochran helped remove 23,000 cubic feet of piping, equipment and contaminants such as asbestos during initial Feed Plant cleanup so that part of the complex could be torn down. Nearly 47,000 cubic feet more waste awaits removal.

“There is a feeling of accomplishment seeing things cleaned up,” Cochran said. “My crew and I are proud of that.”

Cochran, a member of United Steelworkers Local 550, works for LATA Environmental Services of Kentucky, LLC, DOE's Paducah cleanup contractor.

Money saved on the smelter project will help clean up and demolish two areas of the Feed Plant Complex, which spans nine facilities covering nearly 200,000 square feet.

Recovery Act money will help finish Feed Plant demolition in 2011. The work is challenging and unique because it is being done in the middle of the nation's only gaseous diffusion plant still operating, Seifert said.

Other remaining Recovery Act funding will go toward cleaning up and preparing C-340, known as the metals plant, for demolition. Built in the mid-1950s and operated off and on until 1973, the complex converted depleted uranium hexafluoride to uranium metal, as well as uranium oxides and metal. About half of the more than 100,000 cubic feet of systems waste has been removed and packaged for disposition.



From left, James Crittendon and Jessie Wilson remove copper bus bars from the old Feed Plant at DOE's Paducah Site, while John Barnett assists.



Copper materials were removed from the Feed Plant for transfer to ToxCo Inc. for reuse.