



A Recovery Act worker saws a bolt loose so that a motor can be removed from the Feed Plant, which operated from 1957 to 1977. Uranium hexafluoride and fluorine were manufactured there.

Recovery Act Workers Save Money, Time in Paducah Site Demolitions

PADUCAH, Ky. – Having saved millions of dollars cleaning up and tearing down an old smelter in September 2010, Recovery Act workers at the Paducah Site are moving on to demolish other closed facilities by September 2011.

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 Paducah’s existing Recovery Act projects. The site received about \$80 million from the Recovery Act.

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

Workers will clean up and demolish two areas of the Feed Plant Complex, which spans nine facilities covering nearly 200,000 square feet. The complex operated from 1957 to 1977, during which time uranium hexafluoride and fluorine were manufactured there.

The estimated \$18 million Recovery Act project at the Feed Plant is challenging and unique because it is being done in the middle of the nation’s only gaseous diffusion plant that is still in operation, Seifert said. To address that challenge, the Paducah Site completed additional evaluation and documentation to ensure decontamination and demolition activities wouldn’t impact ongoing operations at the plant.

Other Recovery Act funding is helping clean up and prepare 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.

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 of additional 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. □