

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Cleanup Begins at DOE Idaho Building Site of Drum Breach**

**IDAHO FALLS, ID** – Cleanup has begun at the scene of an April 11 incident involving the breach of four 55-gallon drums at the Department of Energy's Radioactive Waste Management Complex (RWMC) in eastern Idaho.

On May 21, crew members wearing sealed radiological suits with supplied air entered the Accelerated Retrieval Project V (ARP V) facility and began cleanup of areas where waste material was deposited during the incident.

The affected waste drums from the April 11 event had been processed earlier that day, and were repackaged and staged for several hours before they experienced excessive pressure and ejected their lids and some of their contents. None of the drums had completed the final characterization, treatment and certification process required for shipment to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in New Mexico.

Crews have entered the ARP V facility several times to collect waste samples from working surfaces, the floor and the drums themselves. Two independent laboratories are analyzing the samples to determine their radiological and chemical properties as well as their potential for reaction. Such data will help a Causal Analysis Team determine the likely cause of the event and prevent a recurrence.

The ARP V facility where the event occurred was designed to contain any contamination inside the building. It has a negative air flow, pulling air from the outside and channeling all exhaust through the facility's high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters that trap contaminants.

Since 2012, the ARP V facility has processed and repackaged approximately 9,500 drums of sludge-contaminated waste to characterize it, and remove liquids and prohibited items from the waste in preparation for certification and shipment to WIPP for permanent disposal. Cleanup of the facility is expected to take several weeks.

*Fluor Idaho, LLC is a wholly owned subsidiary of Fluor Corporation with partners comprised of CH2M, North Wind Inc., Portage, and Waste Control Specialists. Fluor Idaho manages the Idaho Cleanup Project Core contract at the Department of Energy's Idaho Site located 45 miles west of Idaho Falls. The 5-year, \$1.4 billion project, funded through the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management, focuses on early risk reduction and protection of the Snake River Plain Aquifer.*

For more information visit the Idaho Cleanup Project on the Web at <https://fluor-idaho.com>