

For Immediate Release
Date: October 3, 2019



Media Contact: Erik Simpson, (208) 390-9464

Fluor Idaho Collaborates With Battelle Energy Alliance To Remove Idaho National Laboratory Legacy Reactor

IDAHO FALLS, Idaho – Environmental Management (EM) crews recently demolished a legacy research reactor built in the 1950s at DOE's Idaho National Laboratory (INL), using innovative tools to break down its 4.5-foot-thick concrete shield.

The Argonne Fast Source Reactor was constructed at the Materials and Fuels Complex to create neutron fields that exposed materials to a radioactive environment.

While the reactor's operations ended in the early 1980s, construction of new buildings and research facilities continued around the reactor in subsequent years. Its location inside the active Electron Microscopy Laboratory, and next to research facilities, required precise and efficient demolition work.

Crews with Fluor Idaho, EM's INL Site contractor, collaborated with contractor Battelle Energy Alliance, which manages INL, to remove the old reactor while limiting impact to research schedules and other ongoing laboratory operations.

"While the detailed planning and technology contributed to the achievement, the ultimate success can be found in the mutual trust and appreciation between two contractors collaborating to complete a difficult, but ultimately successful operation," said Jack Zimmerman, manager of the DOE Idaho Operations Office EM program.

After considering options for tearing down the reactor, the demolition team determined a diamond wire saw would be the most effective means to remove the structure's shield, which was not radiologically contaminated.

A diamond wire saw uses a cable and a pulley system that put continuous tension on the surface it cuts through. Crews sliced the reactor into 56 blocks, each weighing between 3,000 and 5,000 pounds, and removed them with a gantry crane.

Fluor Idaho, LLC is a wholly owned subsidiary of Fluor Corporation with subcontractor partners 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 National Laboratory 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 safely remediating the Idaho National Laboratory site including dispositioning transuranic waste, managing spent nuclear fuel, and treating high-level radioactive waste.

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

Suggested Caption

A diamond wire saw was used to slice concrete shielding, exposing the center of the Argonne Fast Source Reactor. A gantry crane was used to lift the resulting concrete blocks.