

For Immediate Release

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Spent Nuclear Fuel Transfers Support DOE's Commitment to State of Idaho

IDAHO FALLS, Idaho – Crews recently completed the first two of nearly 40 shipments of [spent nuclear fuel](#) to a temporary storage area at the [Idaho National Laboratory \(INL\) Site](#) planned for 2020, helping the Department of Energy (DOE) move toward meeting its commitment with the State of Idaho to transfer the material from wet to dry storage by 2023.

Spent nuclear fuel handlers and other employees with Fluor Idaho, DOE's INL Site cleanup contractor, retrieved the fuel from an underwater basin at Chemical Processing Plant (CPP)-666 at the Idaho Nuclear Technology and Engineering Center (INTEC). They transferred the fuel to a shipping cask, which was loaded onto a tractor trailer and transported to the Radioactive Scrap and Waste Facility (RSWF) at the Materials and Fuels Complex (MFC). The cask was then unloaded from the trailer, placed over below-ground steel fuel storage liners and lowered into place.

The RSWF, measuring almost 450 feet long and 390 feet wide, was originally built to receive remote-handled transuranic waste. However, modifications allowed it to serve as a temporary storage area for the fuel.

"The first shipments went off perfectly," said Russ Cottam, Fluor Idaho spent nuclear fuel manager. "Our crews had practiced the processes using a mock-up and used a mobile crane and forklift to simulate the conditions at the RSWF. The placement of fuel at RSWF went according to plan."

Workers are scheduled to make as many as 38 additional shipments of the fuel from INTEC to RSWF this year, with shipments continuing into 2021.

Beginning in September last year, equipment operators, engineers, fuel handlers, fabricators and others worked as a team to conduct mock-ups of the fuel transfers at INTEC. Using a cask assembly built by the INTEC fabrication shop and a cask designed by INTEC engineers, the team practiced the transfers.

"So many dedicated people were involved in this effort," Cottam said. "Using a mock-up allowed the team to identify challenges, revise procedures and perform the steps flawlessly. It was the epitome of a well thought-out and executed project."

The fuel had originated from the Experimental Breeder Reactor-II (EBR-II) reactor, which operated at the former Argonne National Laboratory-West, now MFC, from 1964 until 1994. The reactor generated power for the INL and provided reactor research benefits. Spent nuclear fuel from EBR-II was transferred to wet storage at CPP-666 from 1986 to 1999.

The spent nuclear fuel basin at INTEC is now nearly 95 percent empty. Just two fuel types remain: EBR-II and Advanced Test Reactor (ATR). ATR fuel continues to be transferred to CPP-603 for dry storage.

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>