

## Public comment sought on hot cell removal project at the Idaho Site's Advanced Test Reactor Complex

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is seeking public comment on a project to remove three unused hot cells and the 1950s era laboratory building that contains them at the Idaho Site's Advanced Test Reactor complex. An Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) document with three proposed alternatives for the final end state of the building and hot cells is under evaluation by DOE, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Idaho's Department of Environmental Quality.

The TRA-632 building and the hot cells were built in 1952 for assembly, disassembly and examination of nuclear test reactor components. The 13,000 sq. foot building contains three shielded hot cells with lathes, power saws, grinders, and other remote handling equipment. In addition to the examination of test reactor components, the hot cells have been used during the production of radioisotopes for medical use like cobalt-60 and iridium-192. The last active work in the hot cells took place in 2004, and the aging facility was placed on standby in 2006.

The EE/CA document evaluates three alternatives for disposition of the TRA-632 hot cells. The piping below the TRA-632 floor slab will be addressed in accordance with other environmental documents. If contaminated soils are encountered below TRA-632 after removal of the floor slab, those soils will also be addressed in a future environmental document. The three alternatives are:

1. No Action. The no action alternative assumes no decommissioning or demolition would be conducted on the building or hot cells and there would be no further surveillance or maintenance. The no action alternative offers no reduction in toxicity, mobility, or volume of contaminants, and is only used as a baseline for comparison.
2. Continued Surveillance and Maintenance. Under this alternative, the building and hot cells would be left in place, under continuing surveillance and maintenance. This alternative also offers no reduction in toxicity or volume of contaminants, and only limited protection from mobilization of the contaminants to the environment above that provided by Alternative 1.
3. Removal of the TRA-632 hot cells (Recommended Alternative): Under this alternative, the building and the three hot cells would be removed whole or in sections to the lined Idaho CERCLA Disposal Facility. Under Alternative 3, all above-grade (above the floor slab) hazardous substances will be removed.

The EE/CA has also been posted to the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) Administrative Record website, and is available for public comment through October 20, 2009. The INL Administrative Record can be found on the Internet at <http://ar.inel.gov/> and hard copies are available to the public at the following locations:

|                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Albertsons Library     | INL Technical Library     |
| Boise State University | DOE Public Reading Room   |
| 1910 University Drive  | 1776 Science Center Drive |
| Boise, ID 83725        | Idaho Falls, ID 83415     |
| (208) 426-1625         | (208) 526-1185            |

Written comments on DOE's plan can be sent or emailed to:

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After the close of the public comment period, DOE will address public comments in an Action Memorandum and document its selected alternative.