

Idaho Cleanup Project grows its workforce to complete ARRA work

Over a hundred new faces have already joined the Idaho Cleanup Project (ICP) workforce, both in offices and at work sites across DOE's Idaho Site. The ICP is ramping up its workforce to complete new work scope assigned to the ICP under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

As of June 27, 143 new workers have been hired by CH2M-WG Idaho (CWI), contractor for the ICP, with dozens more still in the hiring and training process, both direct employees and subcontractors. This is on top of more than 200 workers who were facing layoffs, but due to the new work, will now continue their employment. In addition, 47 more employees have been hired by Bechtel BWXT Idaho, which operates the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project that also received ARRA funding, nearly completing that company's ARRA hiring.



CWI President and CEO John Fulton greets newly hired ICP employees at a June orientation session in Idaho Falls.

Much of the ARRA work was previously planned for completion some time after the current cleanup contract ends in 2012, but the work has been accelerated, allowing ICP to complete the work sooner, providing more immediate environmental benefits and helping pave the way for new missions for DOE's Idaho National Laboratory.

"One of the biggest reasons the ICP workforce has performed so well is our strong safety culture," said John Fulton, President and CEO of CH2M-WG Idaho, the main cleanup contractor at DOE's Idaho Site. "The work here was already progressing rapidly, so one of my priorities is to ensure we train our new team members well, and get them used to working with this culture. We watch out for each other, and we encourage everyone to point out when we can work smarter – we think there's always a safer, more efficient way to get something done."

Many of the new hires will be used to accelerate the decontamination and demolition of roughly 90 facilities/structures, but others will be assigned to help speed up exhumation of buried waste and for shipping different types of waste for off-site disposal. This type of work relies on the expertise of engineers; D&D workers, construction, and skilled trade workers; operators; and candidates with experience in project controls, safety, and industrial hygiene.

The new D&D work includes a wide range of structures, simple ones like old camera towers, to very complex decommissioned reactors and radiological laboratory facilities.

"We're starting with the simpler structures, and we've spread the new hires among all of our work teams, so we'll have our seasoned veteran D&D workers there to mentor the new workers and keep each other safe," said Dan Coyne, manager of the D&D teams for the Idaho Cleanup Project. "Taking down old nuclear facilities is unlike anything most of them have done before. The buildings have been modified for changing missions over the years, and the drawings can't always be trusted. We have to be ready to deal with surprises; our proven approach will help them be safe as we proceed."

Over the past several weeks, the ICP has advertised positions in Idaho Falls, Pocatello, and Arco, interviewed potential candidates from the Yucca Mountain Project in Nevada, and kept its parent companies informed of openings. The Project has received more than 2,000 resumes from interested applicants through its Web site (listed below).

The Idaho Cleanup Project is managed by CH2M-WG Idaho (CWI) for the U.S. Department of Energy. CWI is a partnership of Denver-based CH2M Hill and the Washington Division of URS Corporation. For more information on the Idaho Cleanup Project, visit us at <https://idahocleanupproject.com>.