EM Recovery NEWS FLASH

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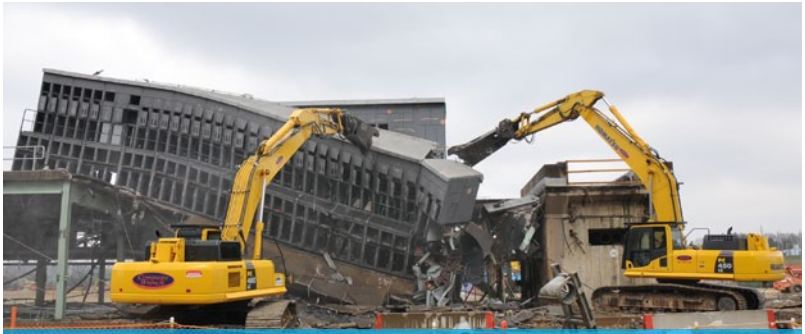
Recovery Act Project Clears Portsmouth Switchyard, Benefits Community through Recycling

A view of the X-533 Electrical Switchyard before demolition.

A view of the X-533 Electrical Switchyard after demolition.



Recovery Act workers demolish the East Switchgear House in the X-533 Electrical Switchyard.

PIKETON, Ohio — American Recovery and Reinvestment Act workers recently completed the demolition of structures in an electrical switchyard used to help power the Portsmouth Site's uranium enrichment processes for defense and commercial uses for nearly five decades.

In the $28 million Recovery Act project completed safely and on schedule, workers demolished 160 towers as tall as 120 feet that were used to operate the X-533 Electrical Switchyard.

The 20-acre complex was one of two high-voltage switchyards that together provided up to 2,200 megawatts of power — enough to light up New York City at the time the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant was constructed in the 1950s. The remaining switchyard continues to operate.

At the X-533 Electrical Switchyard, Recovery Act workers also removed 18 transformers, two switchgear houses, and a two-story control room. With the help of a 600-ton crane, they hauled away 10 synchronous condensers weighing as much as 260 tons apiece that were used to adjust electrical conditions on the local power distribution grid.

The switchyard distributed power to one of three uranium enrichment process buildings and support facilities. Uranium enrichment production ended at the Portsmouth Site in 2001.

An extensive amount of materials removed from the switchyard are recyclable.

"Through an agreement between DOE and its recognized community reuse organization, Southern Ohio Diversification Initiative (SODI), DOE is providing over 8,000 tons of clean scrap metals and other materials from the switchyard project for recycling or reuse to boost economic development efforts in the region," DOE Portsmouth Site Lead Joel Bradburne said.