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## **Rocky Flats workers begin demolition of the “Most dangerous building in America”**

**GOLDEN, Colo., July 15, 2004 – In a huge milestone for the nation’s nuclear cleanup program, workers who once produced nuclear weapons began demolition today of one of the most hazardous nuclear facilities in America.**

**Building 771, at the Rocky Flats facility outside of Denver Colorado, is the first plutonium process building of its size and complexity to be demolished in the United States. The building has a 50-year legacy of plutonium leaks and spills and a major fire occurred there in 1957. In 1994 the Department of Energy concluded that Building 771 was its greatest vulnerability because of the hazardous and radioactive materials it once housed. It was also dubbed by the national media as “the most dangerous building in America”. One of four original manufacturing buildings at Rocky Flats, dismantlement is expected to take six to eight weeks completing demolition in September 2004.**

**“This represents a historic milestone in closing Rocky Flats and the most significant cleanup accomplishment to date in the DOE complex,” said Secretary Abraham. “The demolition of one the most contaminated buildings in the country, once thought impossible, demonstrates the nation’s commitment to accelerated cleanup and closure of Rocky Flats. When this historic cleanup is complete, it will show that the U.S. government can clean up the legacy of the Cold War and turn the 6,000-plus acre reserve from a perceived public liability into a true public asset, a National Wildlife Refuge managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.”**

**“Workers have achieved what many thought was impossible, by cleaning up one the most contaminated buildings in the country” said Department of Energy Manager Frazer Lockhart. “The demolition of Building 771 is the second of the site’s five major plutonium contaminated facilities to be demolished and the beginning of a period of numerous demolition activities that will occur over the next 18 months,” said Lockhart. “The remaining 450 facilities and structures will be decommissioned and demolished and environmental remediation completed keeping Rocky Flats on schedule to safely close in 2006.”**

**“This is a tribute to the ability of Rocky Flats workers that involved a comprehensive nine year effort,” said Nancy Tuor, Kaiser-Hill President & CEO. “The cleanup process included safely draining and stabilizing 15,000 liters of plutonium solutions, and removing 240 contaminated gloveboxes, 251 tanks, more than 11 miles of aging piping, and 40,000 liters of contaminated sludges.”**

**Tearing down Building 771 is just part of the cleanup job in its final stages at the site. Building 881 a former facility which processed and machined enriched uranium into finished weapons components will be demolished on Saturday, July 17.**

**Rocky Flats is a DOE owned cleanup and closure site operated by Kaiser-Hill Company under an accelerated closure contract. The Rocky Flats mission includes the now completed special nuclear material management and shipment, nuclear deactivation and decommissioning, waste management and shipment, environmental cleanup and site closure. When cleanup is complete, the site will be transitioned to a National Wildlife Refuge managed by the US Fish & Wildlife Service.**