

FERNALD FACT SHEET~ AN OVERVIEW



When the Atomic Energy Commission, predecessor to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), broke ground for a new uranium processing facility near Cincinnati, Ohio in 1951, winning the Cold War was a national priority. For the next four decades, Fernald workers produced 500 million pounds of pure uranium metal products for the nation's defense program. When the site ceased operations in 1989 because of declines in demand for Fernald's product and increasing environmental concerns, 31 million net pounds of nuclear product, 2.5 billion pounds of waste, and 2.5 million cubic yards of contaminated soil and debris remained on site. Since then, Fernald workers have been dedicated to the remediation of the 1,050-acre site. In November 2000, DOE awarded a closure contract to Fluor Fernald, the engineering and construction company that has managed the site since 1992. The Department of Energy and Fluor Fernald plan to reach site closure in 2006.

The transition of a uranium metal production foundry to an environmental cleanup site initiated a complicated phase in Fernald's history that led to new partnerships between management, labor, regulators, and stakeholders. Stricter environmental regulations and growing public concerns about the safety of site operations prompted DOE and site management to open lines of communication with the community, regulators and workers. Several noteworthy events have played key roles in establishing Fernald's cleanup program:

- 1984:** Local residents form a grassroots environmental group to monitor site operations
- 1989:** The same year management shuts down production operations, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) adds Fernald to its National Priorities List of federal facilities most in need of cleanup
- 1991:** Congress formally ends Fernald's uranium metal production mission and the site becomes the first environmental cleanup facility in the DOE complex
- 1993:** DOE forms the Fernald Citizen's Advisory Board to develop public consensus on cleanup issues, beginning a new phase of public involvement in decision-making
- 1995:** DOE approves a site disposal strategy that combines off-site disposal of smaller volumes of more highly-contaminated materials and on-site disposal of larger volumes of lower-level contaminated materials

LEFT: The Fernald site in the early 1950s (7943-01) shortly after startup of production.

RIGHT: The Fernald site in November 2002 (7806-1) during full-scale cleanup operations.