

Protégé company expands capabilities

A new facility just north of the Office of River Protection office building is now available to test tank waste retrieval technologies and train operators. Constructed by WRPS protégé company Columbia Energy and Environmental Services (CEES), the Columbia Energy Test Center is located on Salk Avenue in the Port of Benton's Richland Innovation Center just east of Stevens Drive, and north of the Office of River Protection office building.

"The Cold Test Facility where we normally do this type of work has become so busy that we were facing a serious congestion problem. Having this new facility available to us relieves the pressure and ensures that our equipment will be tested on time and that operators will receive the proper training in time to put the equipment into the field," said Scott Sax, WRPS Project Operations Manager.

CEES is a woman-owned small business headquartered in Richland. The new test center is available not only to WRPS but to DOE contractors nationwide, as well as private companies that need to test equipment



and train operators. It includes a 40 X 70 foot main platform, stands 38 feet high and can handle equipment loads of up to 240,000 pounds. It also can provide 2,000 amps of power and a water supply of up to 200 gallons per minute. Adjacent to the platform is a control trailer with office space, conference space and HLAN connectivity.

This is the first of several planned development phases for Columbia Energy at the Port of Benton Site. Columbia Energy is hopeful this investment will also create new jobs and bring new work opportunities to the Tri-Cities.

"The test platform offers new capability to DOE and its prime contractors enabling nuclear-grade rigor and quality to be achieved with commercial cost and schedules. This shows our continued commitment to WRPS, our mentor company and the larger DOE mission. We see this as a necessary investment in our ability to be of value as a service provider and an employer in this region for years to come," said Columbia Energy President Brian Brendel.

The first equipment to undergo testing is the modified Mobile Arm Retrieval System which will be used in the near future to remove waste from single-shell tank C-107. Originally tested in the Cold Test Facility it was sent off site for modifications and is now installed at the CEES facility for final testing and operator training. "We're excited to be able to support CEES in a way that allows them to expand their capabilities while meeting our schedule and training needs. It helps us, it helps CEES and ultimately provides new and important capabilities to the DOE complex," Sax said.