

ENVIRONMENT NEWS BRIEFS

Crews at 231 remediate “the phoenix tank”

Tackling a new challenge, crews at 231 recently remediated what LTP is calling “the phoenix tank.”

After eight days of work, the phoenix tank was remediated, characterized and packaged for future low-level waste disposal at an offsite facility.

With very little accessibility, the crew faced several challenges remediating this tank.

“It was totally different than anything we’ve done before,” said Oversized Container Project Manager Mike Romero. “The team did a wonderful job approaching this tank and the challenges it presented.”

To avoid the risks of size reduction, the crew used innovative approaches in decontaminating and characterizing the tank.

A new foaming application with Environmental Alternatives, Inc. (EAI) Rad-Release decontamination process was utilized to ensure ample contact time with the decontamination solution on the walls of the tank. The resultant used decontamination solution was removed from the tank with a pump. Then the removed liquid solidified and was placed in standard waste boxes for future shipment to WIPP.

This tank was a part of the Phoenix Program at TA-55 in the 1980s.



During this time, programs, or campaigns, were branded, which is likely why this tank, having come from a high profile project, had a mural of a phoenix painted on it.

The Initial contamination levels inside the tank were greater than 67,000 nCi/gram classifying it as high-level TRU. To avoid costly and hazardous size reduction, the one inch thick nickel alloy tank was decontaminated to below 37 nCi/gram using EAI's Rad-Release decontamination process allowing the tank to be disposed of as low level waste.