



## Nevada Site Office News

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## **World's Record Tower Demolition Set in Southern Nevada**

**LAS VEGAS, NEVADA – A world's record was set today at the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS), when a 1,527-foot steel tower used in above-ground nuclear experiments in the 1960s was brought down in a planned demolition.**

The Bare Reactor Experiment -- Nevada (BREN) Tower was the tallest structure of its kind ever to be demolished. It was: taller than the Empire State Building (1,454 feet, to the top of lightning rod), taller than the Stratosphere Tower in Las Vegas (1,148 feet) and half-again as tall as the Eiffel Tower (1,063 feet, with antenna).

The tower was brought down due to safety concerns for personnel working nearby and risk to aircraft flying in the area. Contributing factors included lack of use, maintenance issues, and an uneconomical cost of more than \$1 million that would have been required return the tower to a usable state.

“This was truly a spectacular event,” said Stephen A. Mellington, site office manager for the Nevada Site Office of National Nuclear Security Administration, which oversees operations at the NNSS. “Watching 345 tons of steel come tumbling down was quite a sight.”

DEMCO, Inc. of West Seneca, NY, partnered with Controlled Demolition, Inc. of Phoenix, MD, to bring down the tower. Because the tower was so tall, highly controlled demolition techniques were employed. Explosives were used to remove a small section of one leg of the tower at ground level and sever the tensioned guy wires and the anchor/stanchions on the opposite side.

The tower was constructed in 1962 at the then-named Nevada Test Site to provide a platform for health physics studies associated with nuclear weapons testing. The initial focus was on replicating the doses of radiation received by the survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. The tower's height was determined by the altitude at which the “Little Boy” atomic bomb was detonated over Hiroshima. It was used for other research until 1999.

Today, the Nevada National Security Site is delivering 21<sup>st</sup> century solutions to America's national security challenges, including global security through nuclear deterrence, nuclear non-proliferation and counterterrorism, and is a leader in science, technology and engineering relating to those efforts.