

Extreme Makeover: *Synfuels Plant Edition*

By Joan Dietz

Visitors enter the model room through a metal archway, representing similar-sized vessels located throughout the Synfuels Plant.

Visitors this summer have been enjoying the newly remodeled visitors' center at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant. Completed in June, the renovated model room and display area features information on the history, construction and operation of the coal gasification facility.

A new lighting system highlights the scale model of the Synfuels Plant built in the early 1980s. Three

new interactive displays feature the process, coproducts and economic value the plant offers.

The 18-month renovation also brought information previously displayed on the first level of the facility to the model room. Thirty-two display panels now line the model room, providing coal facts, construction statistics, process unit information, directions on how pipelines are built, and a variety of other information. Another added feature includes three

32-inch flat screen televisions that show the scrubber, ammonia plant and carbon capture processes at the Synfuels Plant. These units were added after the model and original construction of the plant, so they are not included on the scale model. To ensure all visitors can take in the whole experience, an elevator was also added during the recent renovation.

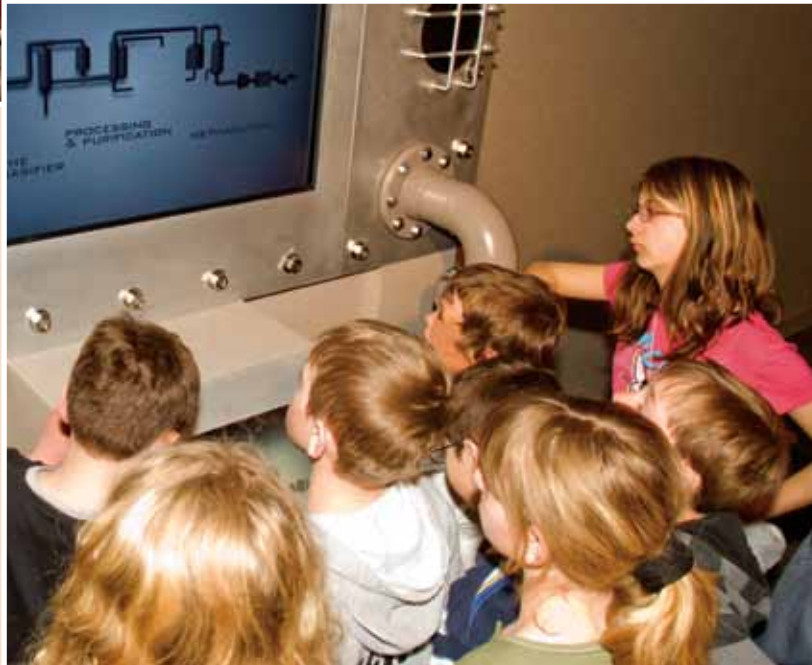
More than 3,200 people have visited the Synfuels Plant through the end of September.



North Dakota Sen. Byron Dorgan, Basin Electric General Manager Ron Harper, Dakota Gasification Company COO and Senior Vice President Gary Loop, and U.S. Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar discuss Synfuels Plant operations in the newly designed model room during a visit in April.



The model room walls are lined with informative panels providing clips about the history, construction and process units at the plant.



School children from Rugby ND's Ely Elementary check out the new interactive touch-screen display that discusses each stage of the coal gasification process.



School groups and electric cooperative groups alike enjoy the new coproducts puzzle. Tour participants are challenged to match the coproducts with how they are used.



The new railing that closely skirts the scale model of the Synfuels Plant allows visitors a closer view of the plant.