

Local Construction Companies Help Demolish Blighted Handball Courts in Spring Valley

By [Eric Yates](#) | June 29, 2011

The handball courts at the Spring Valley-East Communities Center had become a magnet for graffiti and a transient drinking hangout.



Photos Credit San Diego Youth Services

Over the last year, the Spring Valley East Communities Center has been going through quite a transformation, from a shell of a former elementary school into a vibrant, lively center for service and mobilization in Spring Valley.

From the completion of a [Kaboom! playground](#) in February, to the establishment of a [community garden](#) on campus, to a group of [hundreds of Mormons volunteering](#) for beautification projects in May, the change has been impressive.

But some renovation tasks go beyond the scope of groups of energetic volunteers. These “big ticket” items require a commitment of time, equipment and professional construction expertise.

The latest of these comprehensive projects occurred on June 25, when a team carried out the demolition of the unsightly handball walls near the former school’s basketball courts. The walls were unused and had become a magnet for graffiti taggers and an overnight camp-out place for homeless people who had often been drinking.

Kevin Sweeney, real estate director for [San Diego Youth Services](#), turned to the [Associated General Contractors of San Diego](#) for help. The AGC, through its charitable Build & Serve Committee, responded quickly and assembled a team of its member companies.

A few local construction industry companies were quick to respond.

Bill Haithcock, president of [Casper Company](#) in Spring Valley, was the first to step up. He visited the site and offered to donate manpower and equipment for the demolition of the concrete handball walls. Casper Company is located on Bancroft Drive, right across the street from the SVECC. Haithcock said he's seen firsthand how the campus is changing for the better.

"This project just made sense for us," he said. "We're practically neighbors. Neighbors helping neighbors. We actually tore down the walls with our machines—breakers and loaders. It was just a good fit."

His donation of time and resources was followed by other AGC contractors needed to complete the large project. They agreed to donate the trucks, trash bins, torching and hauling of the demolished concrete and rebar, the dumping fees and asphalt patching.

Haithcock said that the trucks were provided by [TC Construction](#). They hauled the demolished rubble to a site owned by [J. Cloud Inc.](#), an El Cajon company that specializes in recycling construction materials at its Rancho San Diego quarry.

Other contractors involved included Soltek and [PRAVA Construction](#). They were assisted by [Pam Scholefield](#) from Scholefield P.C., who handled the legal and insurance matters for the project.

By the end of the day, the walls were demolished, all the debris hauled away, the site was cleaned and the SVECC campus is now much better looking, and most importantly, much safer for the youth and families of Spring Valley.