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A B O U T T H E S A V A N N A H R I V E R S I T E

K Area Complex

The K Area Complex (KAC) provides for the handling and interim storage of our nation's excess plutonium and other special nuclear materials (SNM) in a safe and environmentally sound manner. It is also the recognized leader for managing plutonium surveillance throughout the Department of Energy (DOE) Complex.

Over the last several years, the DOE has been seeking viable alternatives to properly secure and disposition our nation's excess SNM. SRS assisted the DOE Complex in saving millions of taxpayer dollars through the safe receipt and storage of the excess plutonium from the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site in Colorado and the Hanford Site in Washington. Today, KAC is receiving shipments of excess plutonium from Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in New Mexico and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) in California. In addition, shipments of highly enriched uranium (HEU) from LLNL, LANL and Y-12 are in progress.

Special Nuclear Materials shipped to KAC are sealed inside 3013 containers that are nested in robust, state-of-the-art, shipping containers called 9975s. Prior to being packaged at the other sites, the plutonium is stabilized in accordance with established standards for safe storage.



KAC, in tandem with SRNL, has the capability to perform all necessary container surveillance activities.

The KAC is DOE's only SNM storage facility designated for interim safe storage of plutonium and HEU at SRS. The principal operations building formerly housed K Reactor, which produced nuclear materials to support the United States during the Cold War for nearly four decades. It was the DOE's last operating production reactor, shutting down for the last time in 1992. The facility was chosen as the premier DOE Complex plutonium storage facility for several reasons:

- It underwent stringent, well-documented seismic and structural upgrades during the early 1990s.
- It is a robust building, constructed of concrete walls many feet thick.
- Much of the security infrastructure was already in place.
- Necessary modifications were relatively minor, compared to the alternative of constructing a new building.

In recent years, significant security upgrades have been implemented in the KAC to ensure the continued safe storage of SNM until it can be dispositioned. In addition, a full range of plutonium-handling options will soon be realized through other planned improvements. Ultimately, a stabilization and repackaging capability in addition to an expanded surveillance and storage capacity will be provided in the KAC. These changes will further enhance the DOE's ability to manage excess plutonium and other SNM until final disposition is achieved.

Nuclear materials from across the DOE complex are being consolidated at the K Area Complex.



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