

# NEWS from The Savannah River Site



Media Contact: Fran Poda  
(803) 208-3925  
[fran.poda@srs.gov](mailto:fran.poda@srs.gov)

For Immediate Release

## URANIUM MATERIAL LEAVES SRS'S F AREA, BOUND FOR UTAH

AIKEN, S.C. (May 6, 2003) — Material that has been stored in the Savannah River Site's F Area for decades has begun making its way to a disposition site in Utah.

Depleted uranium oxide (DUO), a byproduct of operations in F Area, has been safely stored in more than 35,000 55-gallon drums awaiting disposition. "Oxide" is a powder-like, low-level radioactive material. DUO has no useful purpose at SRS.

In a pilot program, 3,270 drums are being shipped by rail to EnviroCare of Utah, Inc., over the next few months. If all goes well, the rest of the material will also be sent there, says Phil Breidenbach, who manages F Area Closure Projects for Westinghouse Savannah River Company.

"This is a real step forward in dispositioning excess nuclear materials," Breidenbach says. "We're focusing on accelerating cleanup and eliminating hazards quickly and safely. We've been pursuing efforts to disposition the DUO for some time now. The beginning of the shipments is a tribute to the hard work and commitment of the people in F Area."

The total cost for the pilot is approximately \$2 million, which covers everything needed to properly dispose of the material.

F Area is one of two chemical processing areas at SRS. Historically, F Canyon operated to produce plutonium for United States defense. In the early 1990s, it was determined that the United States had no need for more plutonium. F Canyon continued to operate to stabilize all existing materials, and it completed all scheduled operations in March of 2002.

F Area employees are now focused on reducing hazards and costs associated with the facilities.

SRS is owned by the Department Of Energy and operated by a team led by WSRC.

WSRC-03-15