

NEWS from

The Savannah River Site



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For immediate release

ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE TO SHOWCASE EFFECTIVE CLEANUP TECHNOLOGIES

AIKEN, S.C., June 1-- About 300 professionals from across the country will meet in Atlanta on July 17-19 to share information on innovative and cost-effective techniques for cleaning up environmental contamination and destroying hazardous materials.

The conference—the Environmental Restoration Technology End Users Conference—will be at the Westin Peachtree Plaza. The sponsors are the Department of Energy, the Department of Defense, and the Environmental Protection Agency (Region IV).

Guest speakers include DOE's Gerald Boyd, deputy assistant secretary for science and technology, and Annette Gatchett, associate director for technology with EPA's National Risk Management Research Laboratory in Cincinnati.

Many of the techniques to be discussed can be used to attack very common problems, such as contamination by petroleum products or industrial solvents.

Leading the list of topics, for example, is the application of dynamic underground stripping at the Savannah River Site. This technology is patented by Lawrence

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Livermore National Laboratory. Steam injected to the subsurface moves concentrated solvent deposits to an extraction well, thereby removing a source of ground water contamination in less than a year. That cleanup would take decades with conventional pump-and-treat methods.

Some cleanup methods are heavy on hardware, such as the plasma torch used to turn contaminated soil (or other materials) to glass with a “flame” of 4,000 to 7,000 degrees Celsius.

There is increasing reliance, however, on natural systems. One study to be reported involved planting poplar trees at a naval weapons station to clean up volatile organic compounds. Use of natural systems is growing at the Savannah River Site, also.

“Participants in the earlier conferences have agreed that it’s a valuable tool to spread the use of new, effective and economical cleanup methods,” said Tom Heenan, DOE’s assistant manager for environment, science and technology at the Savannah River Site. “Successful, cost-effective cleanup technology is what everyone is looking for, both in government and the private sector.”

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