



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

SAVANNAH RIVER OPERATIONS OFFICE

AIKEN, SC 29802

NEWS MEDIA CONTACTS

Amy Caver (803) 952-7213

amy.caver@srs.gov

CarolAnn Hibbard, (508) 661-2264

news@ameresco.com

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SRS MARKS SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONAL STARTUP OF NEW BIOMASS COGENERATION FACILITY

*Senior DOE Officials and SC Congressional Leadership Gather to Celebrate
Major Renewable Energy Project*

AIKEN, S.C. – (March 12) Today, Under Secretary of Energy Thomas D'Agostino joined U.S. Representative Joe Wilson (R-SC) and other senior officials from the Department of Energy (DOE) and Ameresco, Inc. (NYSE:AMRC), a leading energy efficiency and renewable energy company, to mark the successful operational startup of a new \$795M renewable energy fueled facility at the Savannah River Site (SRS).

The 34-acre SRS Biomass Cogeneration Facility is the culmination of 30-months and more than 600,000 hours of labor. This project is also the single largest renewable Energy Savings Performance Contract (ESPC) in the Nation's history. The project sustained and created an estimated 800 jobs, spanning the mechanical, construction, engineering, and supplier sectors. Fully operational, the plant will employ 25 full-time jobs onsite and support the local logging community.

"Developing clean, renewable sources is an important part of President Obama's all-of-the-above approach to American energy," said Under Secretary D'Agostino in addressing an audience of approximately 150 stakeholders and employees during the ribbon cutting ceremony at SRS. "Projects like the SRS biomass facility are helping to deliver energy efficiency savings that benefit both taxpayers and the environment. Hundreds of people were put to work building this new facility that will save money, dramatically reduce emissions at the Savannah River Site, and help the Department to achieve our energy saving goals."

"I would like to congratulate DOE and Ameresco on their joint investment in a new clean energy source," Congressman Wilson shared with ceremony attendees. "Discovering new innovative energy sources is critically important in today's current economic recession. I am very proud of this private sector investor, as it works to reduce energy costs at Savannah River Site at no additional cost to the taxpayer and creates jobs which will spur economic development."

Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management David Huizenga, DOE Savannah River Manager Dave Moody, and George Sakellaris, Ameresco President & Chief Executive Officer, joined Under Secretary D'Agostino and Rep. Wilson for the ceremonial ribbon cutting.

The SRS Biomass Cogeneration Facility replaced a deteriorating and inefficient 1950s-era coal powerhouse and oil-fired boilers, and will generate an estimated \$944 million in savings in energy, operation and maintenance costs over the duration of the contract.

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Clean biomass, consisting of local forest residue and wood chips, and bio-derived fuels will be the primary fuel source for the high-tech renewable energy facility, which has the capacity to combust 385,000 tons of forest residue into 20-megawatts of clean power annually.

Energy savings result from replacing the inefficient D Area Powerhouse with the biomass facility, switching from coal to biomass fuel, and improving the efficiency of the operations with new equipment that better matches SRS's load requirements. Surrounding communities also receive added health and environmental benefits tied to air emission reductions, including avoiding 100,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year.

Renewable Recipient of the *2012 Renewable Energy World Excellence in Renewable Energy Award for Biomass Project of the Year*, the Biomass Cogeneration Facility also advances *Enterprise.SRS (E.SRS)* strategic initiatives. It will help utilize SRS's assets, knowledge and expertise to achieve clean energy goals that yield compelling public health and environmental benefits with real energy and cost savings.

"This is a day for celebrating teamwork and progress. The DOE/Ameresco Project Team did a tremendous job seeing this project through construction to operational startup," said DOE-SR Manager Moody. "The SRS Biomass Cogeneration facility is the pinnacle of success in the Site's contributions to support the Department's energy efficiency goals. Startup of this renewable energy facility is proof in motion that we are committed to *E.SRS* initiatives geared toward utilizing SRS' assets and the knowledge and expertise of our workforce to secure a high-impact future for SRS and to meet national challenges in strategic areas like clean energy."

DOE signed onto an ESPC with Ameresco in 2009 to finance, design, construct, operate, maintain, and fuel the new biomass facility under a 20-year fixed price contract valued at \$795 million.

"Today is the capstone on what has been a tremendous endeavor for our partnership. Together with the Department of Energy, the Savannah River Site, the State of South Carolina and our local and regional partners, we've built an award-winning, large-scale sustainable power resource," said Ameresco's President & CEO Sakellaris. "This SRS Biomass Cogeneration Facility, funded by our ESPC is a shining example of how public-private partnerships can create transformative energy infrastructure for the 21st Century."

ESPCs are contracts in which private companies finance, install, and maintain new energy- and water-efficient equipment at federal facilities. The government pays no up-front costs, saving taxpayer dollars, and the company's investment is repaid over time by the agency from the cost savings generated by the new equipment. This allows the government to use the private sector to purchase more energy-efficient systems and improve the energy performance of their facilities at no extra cost to the agency or taxpayers.

DOE's Office of Environmental Management brokered the ESPC agreement that supports President Obama's aggressive goal of reducing energy waste across the federal government and increasing the use of renewable energy resources. As laid out in the President's Executive Order on Federal Sustainability, the U.S. government can lead by example, by working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 28 percent by 2020, reduce the energy intensity of our facilities by 30 percent by 2015, and significantly expand the amount of electricity we get from renewable energy resources.

Founded in 2000, Ameresco, Inc. (NYSE:AMRC) is a leading independent provider of comprehensive services, energy efficiency, infrastructure upgrades, and renewable energy solutions for facilities throughout North America. With its corporate headquarters in Framingham, MA, Ameresco's workforce of more than 900 employees provides local expertise through its 62 offices in 34 states and five Canadian provinces. For more information, visit www.ameresco.com.

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