

For Immediate Release

Media contact:

Dean Campbell

803.208.8270

[dean.campbell@srs.gov](mailto:dean.campbell@srs.gov)

## DWPF Melter 2 Celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

AIKEN, S.C. (March 26, 2013) – What has been called the “heart” of the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) at the Savannah River Site (SRS) is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, a full eight years beyond its design life expectancy.

Melter 2, the 65-ton, teapot-shaped vessel treats high-level radioactive waste being stored in SRS waste tanks by blending it with a borosilicate frit to form a molten glass mixture. The mixture is poured into stainless steel canisters, which are decontaminated and stored on-site until a permanent storage facility is identified.

The melter, only the second in the 17-year history of DWPF, is celebrating 10 years of service this month and much success.

Its record-setting performance has been noteworthy, according to Steve Wilkerson, Savannah River Remediation’s (SRR) DWPF Project Director.

“The melter plays the key role in DWPF operations,” Wilkerson said. “This melter has been a workhorse for us.”

Melter 2 has poured over 2,200 canisters during its life, nearly double what Melter 1 produced in its life span. Melter 1 was placed into operations in March, 1996. Together, Melters 1 and 2 have poured 3,591 canisters through March 10, 2013. The predicted number of canisters needed to dispose of SRS’s hazardous waste is 7,580.

Terrel Spears, Assistant Manager for Waste Disposition Project, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)-Savannah River Operations Office, called canister production crucial in eliminating the Site’s hazardous waste.

“Since beginning operations, DWPF has poured 14 million pounds of glass and has immobilized about 49 million curies of radioactivity,” Spears said. “Every canister poured means we are reducing the single most substantial environmental risk to people and the environment in the State of South Carolina.”

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SRR keeps one melter in storage in case the working melter needs to be replaced. Currently, Melter 3 is waiting in storage and is ready if needed.

Melter 3 is projected to replace Melter 2 in late 2014 or early 2015, which means Melter 4 will become the melter in waiting.

Melter 4 and its two-ton top were delivered to a storage area on Site on March 6, 2013, where its final assembly will be performed. The Melter 4 vessel, frame and related parts were assembled off-site beginning in late 2011. SRR projects that Melter 4 will be placed into operation approximately six to 10 years after Melter 3 goes into service to accommodate the remaining portion of the 37 million gallons of waste currently stored in SRS's waste tanks.

SRS is owned by DOE. The SRS Liquid Waste contract is managed by SRR, a team of companies led by URS Corp. with partners Bechtel National, CH2M Hill and Babcock & Wilcox. Critical subcontractors for the contract are AREVA, Energy Solutions and URS Professional Solutions.

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