

For Immediate Release
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Salt Processing Reaches First of Two 2013 Contract Milestones

AIKEN, S.C. (April 18, 2013) – Savannah River Remediation (SRR) has reached a contract milestone for 2013 by processing over 600,000 gallons of salt waste through its Interim Salt Disposition Process at the Savannah River Site (SRS).

The milestone was reached on March 23, 2013, when 600,000 gallons were processed through salt dispositioning, which includes the Actinide Removal Process (ARP) and Modular Caustic Side Solvent Extraction Unit (MCU). The ARP and MCU work as an integrated system to remove nearly all of the radioactive isotopes from the salt waste portion of the SRS's radioactive waste in storage tanks.

The chemical isotopes removed by ARP / MCU include cesium, plutonium and strontium. These isotopes are transferred to the Defense Waste Processing Facility, where it is blended with a borosilicate frit and melted to form a molten glass mixture that is poured in stainless steel canisters, which are stored at SRS awaiting permanent storage.

The decontaminated salt solution from salt dispositioning is transferred to the Saltstone facilities for disposition.

Achieving these milestones continues to prove the effectiveness of salt waste processing at SRS, according to Terrel Spears, Assistant Manager for Waste Disposition Project, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)-Savannah River Operations Office.

"I congratulate SRR for reaching this initial milestone," Spears said. "Processing salt waste is essential for us and our mission to close tanks. The salt processing technologies utilized have proven very effective in removing the radioactive constituents from salt waste."

Dave Olson, SRR President and Project Manager, said salt waste constitutes 90 percent of the total waste inventory stored in SRR's two tank farms, and the removal and processing of the waste is key in SRR achieving its mission to close tanks.

(more)

Page 2
SDP milestone

“The milestone demonstrates the safe and continuous operations of a key component in the waste removal process at SRS,” Olson said.

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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