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SRS Completes Waste Retrieval Milestone, Exceeds Expectations

AIKEN, S.C. (May 11, 2021) – The liquid waste contractor at the [Savannah River Site](#) (SRS) has completed a significant waste retrieval project, further advancing the Department of Energy-Environmental Management's (DOE-EM) [mission](#) of safe cleanup of legacy liquid waste.

Savannah River Remediation (SRR) completed a salt dissolution campaign in Tank 37, one of the underground tanks storing high-level liquid waste at SRS. Salt dissolution is a process to dissolve hardened saltcake through water additions and mixing pumps and jets. Dissolving the solids into liquid allows the waste to be transferred to another tank for temporary storage before further processing through the liquid waste system.

Evaporator operations in H Tank Farm were the catalyst for Tank 37 salt dissolution. Use of evaporation reduces the volume of liquid waste in the underground waste storage tanks. Tank 37 is the “drop tank” for 3H Evaporator, meaning the tank receives the concentrated salt from the evaporator output. The 3H Evaporator operations had filled Tank 37 with concentrated salt, causing the need to create additional tank space for more concentrated salt from the evaporator. Dissolving the salt in Tank 37 provided the solution and created excellent feed to the [Salt Waste Processing Facility](#) (SWPF), operated by contractor Parsons.

The success of the Tank 37 campaign will contribute significantly to future SWPF batches, according to DOE-Savannah River Assistant Manager for Waste Disposition Jim Folk.

“Processing six million gallons of SRS tank waste this year is an [EM 2021 priority](#),” Folk said. “Producing high-quality salt batch feed from the tank farms means we are able to provide more material for processing at the Salt Waste Processing Facility, helping us meet this goal.”

Through 14 transfers, SRR dissolved more than 59 inches of salt from the tank, producing 830,000 gallons of high-quality salt solution.

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The Tank 37 salt dissolution project exceeded expectations, according to SRR Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Project Manager Mark Schmitz.

“Savannah River Remediation achieved unprecedented salt dissolution success with Tank 37,” Schmitz said. “Not only did the SRR team dissolve more salt than originally planned, but we also finished the project one month ahead of schedule.”

Emptying and closing waste tanks at SRS is part of EM’s [Strategic Vision 2021-2031](#).

SRR implemented several innovative techniques to improve the salt dissolution campaign, including designing and developing enhanced mixing jets and deploying cameras during water additions and transfers to effectively target and reduce saltcake mounds.



DOE-EM and liquid waste contractor Savannah River Remediation completed a salt dissolution campaign in Tank 37 at the Savannah River Site ahead of schedule, creating tank space for evaporator operations and allowing for more feed to the Salt Waste Processing Facility.