

For Immediate Release

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SRR Reaches Salt Waste Processing Milestone

AIKEN, S.C. (October 8, 2010) - Savannah River Remediation (SRR) has reached an operation milestone by processing one million gallons of salt waste at the Savannah River Site (SRS).

Removing and processing salt waste, which constitutes 90 percent of the total waste inventory stored in SRS's two tank farms, is a major step toward operationally closing the Site's waste tanks. The milestone, reached this week, demonstrates safe and continuous operations of a key component in the waste removal process at SRS.

One million gallons of salt waste has been processed from a waste tank as part of the work of the Actinide Removal Process/Modular Caustic Side Solvent Extraction Unit.

"Salt waste processing is key to emptying and closing waste tanks at SRS," said Terrel Spears, Assistant Manager for Waste Disposition Project, DOE-Savannah River Operations Office. "Our salt processing technologies, which have proven very effective in removing the radioactive constituents from salt waste, are an integral part of DOE's strategy to complete tank closures and protect workers, human health, and the environment."

Jim French, SRR President and Project Manager, said the milestone is an important mark in SRR's work.

"What we have accomplished in salt waste processing sets the stage toward our commitment to close the old-style waste tanks," he said. "Removing salt waste from the tanks is essential in our operations and achieving the necessary processing rate is huge for us."

The salt removal process – known as the Interim Salt Disposition Processing (ISDP) – began operations in April 2008 as an interim salt disposition system designed to remove nearly all radioactivity from salt waste solutions prior to its transfer to the Site's Saltstone Facilities, which safely stabilizes and disposes the waste. The ISDP is referred to as "interim" because it was designed to operate while the Site's Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF) is being constructed.

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SWPF will use processes similar to those found within ISDP, but on a larger scale, to safely process the majority of the Site's salt waste inventory. Lessons learned from processing experience will be evaluated and factored into the final design and operation of the SWPF.

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 Safety Management Solutions.

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Cutlines

For exterior shots of ARP/MCU: One million gallons of salt waste has been processed from an SRS waste tank as part of the work of the Actinide Removal Process/Modular Caustic Side Solvent Extraction Unit.

For contactors shot: An interior shot of the Modular Caustic Side Solvent Extraction Unit showing the contactors, which is part of the SRS salt waste disposition process.