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## Improved Saltstone Sets Production Records

AIKEN, S.C. (November 20, 2012) – It did not take the Savannah River Site's (SRS) Saltstone Facilities long to show results following a planned nine-month and nearly \$8 million improvement outage.

The Saltstone Facilities processed 1.1 million gallons of decontaminated salt solution in September and October for a record two-month processing period. The facilities also set a single month production record by processing 664,129 gallons of salt solution in October.

After re-starting operations in September following the scheduled improvements outage that started in December 2011, Saltstone is functioning as expected. The new system will be more reliable and process larger amounts of decontaminated salt solution because of the improvements implemented during the planned outage, according to Mike Borders, Facility Manager for Saltstone and the Defense Waste Processing Facility.

"We expected a new and more reliable system to process and we got it," Borders explained. "More dependable robust operations at Saltstone will position the Site for continued success in closing waste tanks."

During the outage, new production equipment and process lines were added to the process room. The new equipment and lines improve the facility's mixing and waste transfer system, which sends a cement-like grout powders to a large mixer, where the grout is mixed with the low-level salt waste. From there, the material goes to a small surge tank called a hopper, which was redesigned as part of the improvements to provide more efficient control and monitoring of the production process.

Terrel Spears, Assistant Manager for Waste Disposition Project, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)-Savannah River Operations Office, said the improvements show how reliable Saltstone can be, which is necessary for SRS's mission.

"DOE's ultimate priority is to operationally close our tank farm system and reduce risk," Spears said. "The Saltstone operations are a critical component of DOE achieving that mission."

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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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