

For Immediate Release

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Savannah River Remediation Installs New Cost-Saving Pump Design

AIKEN, S.C. (October 1, 2015) – New Submersible Mixing Pumps (SMP) have been installed in radioactive waste tanks at the Savannah River Site (SRS), fulfilling a cost-saving initiative for the Department of Energy's (DOE) liquid waste contractor Savannah River Remediation (SRR).

The new pumps called "Commercial" SMPs are being used for the first time as a pilot program in Tank 26, located in one of two tank farms at SRS. Two pumps have been installed this year, and two will be installed during the next year. SRR worked collaboratively with GPM Inc. to purchase a commercially available "off-the-shelf" pump and then adapt the pump to a mast used to lower the pump into a waste tank. SRR designed, fabricated and assembled the masts at SRS.

The cost of the new SMPs equals about 20 percent of the cost of the old standard SMPs, which provides the opportunity to save DOE millions of dollars over the lifecycle of the liquid waste program.

Endeavors to use alternative technology and save resources while safely dispositioning radioactive waste is not new to SRR, said Stuart MacVean, SRR President and Project Manager.

"Our employees focus on innovation and are disciplined stewards of the taxpayer resources for the Department of Energy," MacVean said. "The efforts of the Tank 26 Bulk Waste Removal project team have found and customized a pump that saves a significant amount of money in the short and long term."

In addition to the pumps, SRR is finding ways to save money by using the Lean Business Management System, an approach that uses continuous improvement that systematically seeks to accomplish incremental changes that improve efficiency and quality. The savings, such as with the new SMPs, are applied to accelerate other liquid waste priorities, allowing the company to do more work for the U.S. Government.

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Jim Folk, DOE-Savannah River Acting Assistant Manager for Waste Disposition, applauds SRR for continuing to find ways to safely, and cost-effectively, reduce the risk of the waste at SRS.

“SRR’s inventive, cost-saving initiatives are leading the industry in dispositioning and stabilizing radioactive waste and closing waste tanks,” said Folk. “The Bulk Waste Removal technologies and other innovations utilized by SRR have proven effective in executing the liquid waste mission at SRS.”

Upon success of the pilot program, the new SMPs adapted to the SRR-designed masts could replace the existing standard SMPs, which were specially designed to remove radioactive waste from SRS tanks. The new SMPs will mix the waste solids in Tank 26 prior to transferring the waste to the Defense Waste Processing Facility, where the waste will be vitrified into a glass form for safe storage in stainless steel canisters.

SRR is the liquid waste contractor at the Savannah River Site for the U.S. Department of Energy. SRR is composed of a team of companies led by AECOM with partners Bechtel National, CH2M and BWX Technologies. Critical subcontractors for the contract are AREVA, EnergySolutions and URS Professional Solutions.

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