

News from the Savannah River Site

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GROUTING BEGINS ON NEXT SRS WASTE TANK

AIKEN, S.C. (January 19, 2016) – Workers began pouring a cement-like grout today into the next underground radioactive liquid waste storage tank at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Savannah River Site (SRS), initiating operational closure of the eighth high-level waste tank at the Site.

The specially formulated grout is being poured into Tank 12, marking the beginning of a three-month process to fill the nearly one million-gallon tank.

Jack Craig, DOE-Savannah River Manager, called the closure significant and said DOE will continue to work to remediate waste tanks at SRS.

“We have safely removed the liquid waste from this tank and immobilized it, providing us another opportunity to close this storage tank,” Craig said. “The DOE work ensures we continue to protect people and the environment from the risk of this waste.”

Savannah River Remediation (SRR), the SRS Liquid Waste contractor, is performing the work on Tank 12. SRR also operates all the SRS liquid waste facilities for DOE.

Stuart MacVean, SRR President and Project Manager, said employees appreciate the importance of executing their mission safely and efficiently.

“Our workers perform their jobs well, and I’m pleased with their dedication,” MacVean said. “They continue to be innovative and take pride in their achievements.”

Tank 12 is the second H Area tank being filled with grout. Tank 16, which sits near Tank 12, was closed in September 2015.

Tank 12 is a Type I waste tank and was constructed between 1951 and 1953. The tank was placed into service in 1956. This tank has a storage capacity of approximately 750,000 gallons and is 75 feet in diameter.

(more)

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The primary tank sits in a nearly 2-foot thick reinforced concrete vault with a five-foot high annulus secondary pan, much like a cup and saucer arrangement. During its use, the annulus was designed to contain any leaks that may have developed in the primary tank wall.

Tank 12 underwent extensive removal activities for the past several years that included waste material being pumped out, cleaning with specialized mechanical and chemical processes, and isolating the tanks from all systems. These activities were prerequisites leading to regulatory confirmation that the tank was cleaned to the maximum extent practical and ready for closure. Waste tank closure is accomplished through the placement of grout to fill the entire tank and all tank component voids.

The Federal Facility Agreement between DOE, the Environmental Protection Agency, and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control requires that Tank 12 be operationally closed by May 31, 2016.

All of the tanks closed to date include:

- Tank 16 closed in 2015
- Tanks 5 and 6 closed in 2013;
- Tanks 18 and 19 closed in 2012; and
- Tanks 17 and 20 closed in 1997.

-DOE-

SRS is owned by DOE. The SRS Liquid Waste contract is managed by SRR, which is composed of a team of companies led by AECOM with partners Bechtel National, CH2M and BWXT Technologies. Critical subcontractors for the contract are AREVA, EnergySolutions and URS Professional Solutions.

Additional information on the Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management and the Savannah River Site can be found at <http://www.em.doe.gov> or <http://www.srs.gov>.