

Media Contacts:

Sonya Goines, U.S. Department of Energy
803.952.8564
Sonya.Goines@srs.gov

For Immediate Release

Colleen Hart, Savannah River Remediation
803.208.2428
Colleen.Hart@srs.gov

Savannah River Site Effluent Treatment Facility Marks 30 Years of Operation

AIKEN, S.C. (December 11, 2018) – For three decades, the Effluent Treatment Facility (ETF) has treated more than 450 million gallons of wastewater at the Savannah River Site (SRS), ensuring environmentally safe water leaves the site.

ETF treats low-level radioactive wastewater from SRS waste management facilities, Savannah River National Laboratory, and other sources. ETF removes contaminants to ensure compliance with the federal Safe Drinking Water Act before releasing the water into the nearby Upper Three Runs Creek, which flows to the Savannah River.

The facility, which is managed by Savannah River Remediation (SRR) under the SRS liquid waste contract, began operating in October 1988, receiving wastewater from H Canyon and H Tank Farm, with transfers from the site's F Area beginning a few days later.

As one of the final stops in SRS's liquid waste treatment program, ETF is vital to the site's liquid waste system, said Jim Folk, DOE-SR Assistant Manager for Waste Disposition.

"The Effluent Treatment Facility is one of those important facilities that defines DOE's commitment to protecting people, communities, and the environment," Folk said. "It has a phenomenal track record of treating wastewater and allowing SRS missions to safely continue."

As part of the SRS waste management process, potentially contaminated water is collected and sampled to determine if it's safe to discharge to the environment. If the water does not meet the drinking water standard — 4 millirem per year, per person as established by the Safe Drinking Water Act — it is sent to ETF for treatment prior to release.

SRR employee Skip Wiggins was one of eight engineers who helped with ETF's startup testing and early operations in the 1980s.

“ETF is a relatively small operation compared to other site facilities, but its size makes it no less significant in the liquid waste mission,” Wiggins said.

ETF treated 25.2 million gallons of wastewater in fiscal 1998, a record year for the facility due to higher rates of processing wastewater from the H and F canyons.

Under SRR’s contract, which began in 2009, ETF’s highest annual treatment total is 10.46 million gallons in fiscal 2010, due to higher rates of processing wastewater from H Canyon and the H Tank Farm evaporator, which manages overall tank space. In August 2018, ETF treated more than 1.2 million gallons, one of the contractor’s highest monthly totals.

ETF removes constituents like heavy metals, organic and corrosive chemicals, cesium, and other contaminants. Operation of ETF is approved and permitted by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Cutline

- (1) The Effluent Treatment Facility at the Savannah River Site recently celebrated 30 years of operations*
- (2) A Savannah River Remediation employee works at the Effluent Treatment Facility*

