

from Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC

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For Immediate Release

SRS Historic Achievement in Transporting Nuclear Waste to New Mexico

AIKEN, S.C. – (June 8, 2012) Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC (SRNS) personnel recently achieved a historic, first-time achievement within the Department of Energy (DOE) Complex and at the 61 year-old nuclear reservation. On Wednesday, June 6, three transuranic (TRU) waste shipments were made on the same day using three different shipping containers.

TRU waste is solid waste, consisting of clothing, tools, rags, residues, debris and other items contaminated with trace amounts of plutonium.

SRS is the only DOE Site in which a combination of these three shipping containers is used. According to SRNS Solid Waste Director John Gilmour, all three containers are licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and have undergone extensive testing. The Transuranic Package Transporter Model 2 (TRUPACT II) container is designed to transport up to fourteen 55-gallon drums, two Standard Waste Boxes (1.8 cubic meters of waste each) or one Ten-Drum Overpack unit. The shipping trailers normally carry three TRUPACT II containers at one time.

When waste is too large to fit into the TRUPACT II and size reduction is not reasonable a Standard Large Box (SLB) may be utilized. A SLB can hold approximately seven cubic meters of waste. SLBs are then transported in a TRUPACT III container. In August 2011, SRS made its first shipment using the TRUPACT III, which was also a first for the DOE complex.



For the first time in the history of the DOE Complex, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC personnel at SRS made three TRU waste shipments on the same day, using three different shipping containers. The three trucks transporting TRU waste (from left) used TRUPACT-III, RH-72-B and TRUPACT-II containers.

The Savannah River Site is owned by the U.S. Department of Energy and is managed and operated by Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC.

The third container used at SRS to safely transport TRU waste is known as the RH-72-B. This dumbbell shaped container holds up to three 55-gallon drums of TRU waste and offers more protection from higher levels of radiation. The TRUPACT III and RH-72-B are large, each occupying an entire trailer for shipment.

“The ‘workhorse’ for us has been the TRUPACT II container,” said Bert Crapse, DOE-Savannah River Waste Disposition Programs. “The newly designed TRUPACT-III container has recently been used frequently and exclusively at SRS, whereas, only 40 shipments have occurred since 2001 from SRS facilities using the RH-72-B container.”

After the trailers are loaded, the trucks travel non-stop to DOE’s Waste Isolation Pilot Project (WIPP) in Carlsbad, NM. To date, SRS has safely made over 1,360 shipments of TRU waste to WIPP for disposal.

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC, is a Fluor Partnership comprised of Fluor, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, including the Savannah River National Laboratory, located near Aiken, South Carolina.

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