

News from the Savannah River Site

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Two SRNS Teams Honored by NNSA Office of Safety, Infrastructure and Operations with Awards of Excellence

AIKEN, S.C. – September 17, 2019 – Two teams of Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) employees were recognized for outstanding accomplishments in support of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). The teams both received Awards of Excellence from the NNSA Office of Safety, Infrastructure, and Operations (NA-50). NNSA Administrator Lisa E. Gordon-Hagerty presented the awards to team leaders on June 17 during her visit to the Savannah River Site (SRS).

NA-50 is responsible for ensuring that NNSA facilities are safely operated, effectively managed and that current and new facilities are adequately maintained to meet mission needs. The NA-50 Awards of Excellence recognize personnel for outstanding accomplishments involving innovation, effectiveness, teamwork, overcoming adversity and enabling future success in support of NA-50's efforts to achieve the NNSA mission.

Gordon-Hagerty was proud to present the awards to the 232-1H Demolition team and the Mk-18a Target Recovery Project team and said, "The exceptional work of these teams speaks to the excellence of the SRS workforce. Thank you for your contributions to the national security of our great nation."



Lisa E. Gordon-Hagerty presents NA-50 awards to team leaders Mahesh Patel (left photo) and Bill Swift.

Mahesh Patel, who served as 232-1H Demolition team leader, Ken Blankenship, Andrew Murphy, Roger White, Mark Griffith, Chuck Novak, George Cox, Michael Hawkinberry, Kenny Barrineau, Tim Richardson and Chris Garnett were recognized for the successful demolition of the Savannah River Tritium Enterprise's (SRTE) 232-1H building. This achievement, removing the former location of area construction employees and a fabrication shop, marked a significant step towards readying the area for the replacement of Cold War-era facilities with updated and right-sized facilities for the site's ongoing mission.

SRTE Acting Business Director Jeff Westergreen said, "Significant efforts during pre-job planning and excellent coordination among our multifunctional team helped us ensure the building was brought down on schedule and under budget without any safety incidents."

The Savannah River National Laboratory's Mk-18a Target Recovery Project team consisted of Bill Swift, Bradley Loftin, Rich O'Donnell, Charles McKeel, Zach Weis, Kevin Hera, Michael Dalmaso, Michael Brown, Alan Busby, Kurt Peterson, Joel Jones and Chris Verst. They were commended for demonstrating that enhancing worker safety is consistent with efficient project execution as well as stewardship of resources.

The team conceptualized, designed, fabricated and procured an on-site transportation cask and target loading system to move targets from storage to SRNL while eliminating almost all worker exposure to radiation hazards.

"Our team is quite diverse in skills and experience, which has contributed to a lot of creative thinking and innovation," said Swift, who served as team leader. "This project is important for the country because the Plutonium-244 that we recover is necessary for accurate nuclear forensics. We have the only supply in the world, and it is unlikely to ever be produced again because of the expense, time and lack of equipment."

Established by Congress in 2000, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science. The mission of the NNSA Savannah River Field Office (SRFO) is to provide operations, programs, and project oversight and contract administration for NNSA field activities at the Savannah River Site, located near Aiken, South Carolina.

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