

News from the Savannah River Site

US DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY • AIKEN • SC 29808

For Immediate Release

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SRS COMPLETES CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SALTSTONE DISPOSAL UNIT

AIKEN, SC (July 21, 2017) – Construction is complete 16 months ahead of schedule and \$25 million under budget on a new disposal unit for saltstone waste at the Savannah River Site.

The 32.8-million gallon Saltstone Disposal Unit 6 (SDU 6), which cost about \$118 million, was designed and built by SRS liquid waste contractor Savannah River Remediation. It can accommodate the larger stream of decontaminated salt solution from the Salt Waste Processing Facility, scheduled to begin operations in December 2018. SDU 6 is more than 10 times larger than the six previously constructed tanks, and is the first of seven planned to store the remaining tank waste.

“The SDUs are an important part of our cleanup mission and underscore the Department of Energy's continued commitment to furthering progress on the closure of the high-level waste tanks at SRS,” said Jack Craig, DOE-Savannah River Manager.

Salt waste in SRS tanks makes up about 90 percent of the waste volume. The saltstone facility receives decontaminated salt solution after highly radioactive isotopes, primarily cesium, are removed and transferred to the Defense Waste Processing Facility to be turned to glass and stored at SRS awaiting permanent disposal.

“We worked in partnership with DOE on an innovative design for SDU 6 that would meet the cleanup needs of the Site and make operations more efficient in the future,” said Tom Foster, Savannah River Remediation President and Project Manager. “We are proud to bring this project in under budget and ahead of schedule to support the SRS mission.”

The SDU 6 design is different from the previous six SDUs, which each hold roughly three million gallons of saltstone. The innovative design resembles commercial water tank applications.

The larger size of SDU 6 and its successors will result in more than \$500 million in cost savings over the life of the low-level saltstone waste storage program because it requires less infrastructure and materials to design and build the larger SDUs. SRS would have needed 80 of the smaller saltstone disposal units.

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SRS will need only seven of the larger units to meet mission needs. DOE's Office of Environmental Management has approved the concept of replicating the efficient SDU 6 design for all remaining SDUs at SRS. Work has begun on SDU 7.

END

Photos/Captions



Saltstone Disposal Unit 6 at the halfway point in construction.



Savannah River Site's first mega-volume Saltstone Disposal Unit sits on 2-1/2 acres and will hold about 33 million gallons of saltstone.