

For Immediate Release

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## **SRR Glassification Project Continues Ahead of Schedule**

AIKEN, S.C. (April 29, 2010) – The Savannah River Site's Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) is getting an extreme makeover.

Not only is the world's largest operating glassification plant ahead of schedule in converting liquid nuclear waste into a stable glass form, but the facility is gearing up for improvements this year that will increase production.

"It's nice to be ahead of schedule," said Steve Wilkerson, Waste Treatment Manager, "but we are committed to nearly doubling our output to reach our goal of operationally closing 22 waste tanks during our contract. We have more work to do to accomplish that goal."

The DWPF annual production rate of stainless steel canisters over the last 10 years has averaged 215 glass-filled stainless steel canisters. In order to reach its tank closure commitment, Savannah River Remediation (SRR), the liquid waste contractor at the Savannah River Site (SRS), must average 400 canisters per year beginning in 2012.

"We have committed to the Department of Energy (DOE) to operationally close 22 waste tanks in eight years," said Jim French, SRR President and Project Manager. "In order to meet that commitment, we are enhancing the DWPF and making modifications to our waste feed preparations. With these improvements, we will be successful."

A two-step glass production rate improvement program has begun.

The first step, which is targeted for completion later this year, includes retrofitting the facility's giant melter, a 65-ton melting pot, with a bubbler mixing system to increase throughput. This step alone will increase canister production to 325 canisters per year.

The second step involves upgrading the melter feed preparation capacity, which will take place in the 2011 – 2012 timeframe. Together, the two-steps will enable DWPF to attain 400 canisters a year. "The key is to keep the melter running," Wilkerson said, "and maximizing the efficiency of outages while minimizing the situations that result in unplanned shutdowns."

As of April 9, DWPF had poured 165 canisters. The facility's July 1 milestone is 187 canisters, a mark SRR expects to exceed.

“DWPF continues to help us safely and efficiently dispose of radioactive waste,” said Terrel Spears, Assistant Manager for Waste Disposition Project, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)-Savannah River Operations Office. “SRS is a leader in turning waste into glass thanks to more than a dozen years of successful DWPF operation, which makes future tank closure possible.”

SRS is owned by DOE. The SRS Liquid Waste contract is managed by SRR, a team of companies led by URS Corp. with partners Bechtel National, CH2M Hill and Babcock & Wilcox. Critical subcontractors for the contract are AREVA, Energy Solutions and URS Safety Management Solutions.

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Cutline: The Defense Waste Processing Facility is the world's largest operating glassification plant and is located at the Savannah River Site.