

News from the Savannah River Site

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SRS Solid Waste Management Implements Remote Tool Use

AIKEN, S.C. (December 5, 2022) – Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) employees in the Solid Waste Management Facility (SWMF) at the Savannah River Site (SRS) recently implemented the use of a remote release rigging hook to place low-level waste (LLW) into a burial trench for the first time, saving time and reducing risks to workers.

“In the past, Rigging and Heavy Equipment operators had to climb on the flatbed trailer that carried the LLW to manually attach the hook to the rigging, and then fish the rigging off the hook once it's been lowered into the trench,” said SWMF Manager Verne Mooneyhan of SRNS. “There is always the potential for contamination when working that closely with LLW, so we looked for a better way.”

The answer came in the form of magnetic hooks that could attach to the rigging of the LLW and remotely released by a crane operator once the LLW was in the trench. This prevents riggers from having to enter the trench to release the hook, saving time. The distance protects the riggers from potential contamination as well.

“SRNS continues to improve our procedures and processes to ensure we are using the safest and most effective methods to get the job done,” said SRNS President and CEO Stuart MacVean. “Any time we can reduce the hazards to our workers is a good day for our company.”



The remote release hook allows riggers to place low-level radioactive waste in a slit trench with less potential for contamination.



The remote release hook disengaging from rigging after lowering low-level waste into a slit trench.

LLW includes items that have become contaminated with radioactive material or have become radioactive through exposure to radiation. At SRS, LLW is buried in engineered trenches, called slit trenches, in SWMF. SWMF is responsible for the disposition of SRS's solid wastes, which include sanitary, construction and demolition (C&D), hazardous, low-level radioactive and transuranic wastes.

Watch the remote hook in action here or by visiting https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s000_HTViFc.