



# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

**SAVANNAH RIVER OPERATIONS OFFICE  
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## **Savannah River Site Makes Its 1,000<sup>th</sup> Transuranic Waste Shipment to WIPP**

AIKEN, S.C., June 3, 2009 – The Savannah River Site (SRS) will achieve a significant milestone today, when the 1,000<sup>th</sup> shipment of transuranic (TRU) waste is made to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) located near Carlsbad, New Mexico.

The shipment marks the eighth year of SRS safely shipping radioactive waste from South Carolina to New Mexico without incident. SRS made its first shipment of TRU waste to WIPP on May 8, 2001. SRS has safely shipped more than 28,200 55-gallon drums of TRU waste for disposal at the WIPP geologic repository since that time.

“This is a significant accomplishment for the Savannah River Site and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, demonstrating the Department of Energy’s commitment to cleaning up legacy waste sites and safely disposing of the waste inventories,” said Jeff Allison, Manager of DOE’s Savannah River Operations Office. “Every shipment is inspected by the South Carolina Department of Transportation and the Department of Health and Environmental Control to assure it’s safe to go on the road before it’s released. Both agencies have played important roles in maintaining the safety of shipments and supporting the Department of Energy in this accomplishment.”

Since the beginning of SRS operations in the early 1950s, over 30,000 drums and 3,000 non-drum containers of TRU waste have accumulated on concrete pads, where they are covered over with soil, awaiting final disposition. TRU waste consists of mainly clothing, tools, rags, debris, and other such items used during nuclear material production and contaminated with radioactive elements, primarily plutonium, with an atomic number greater than uranium. Radioactive wastes are classified TRU waste if the concentrations of specific radioactive elements exceed a specific limit.

MORE

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**<http://sro.srs.gov/index.html>**

## **1000<sup>th</sup> TRU Shipment 2-2-2-2**

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS), the management and operating contractor at SRS, is continuing to inspect old TRU waste containers, remove items prohibited from disposal at WIPP (e.g., aerosol cans and liquids) and then repackage and characterize the remaining legacy TRU wastes to ensure its acceptability for disposal at WIPP. The remaining legacy TRU waste at SRS is being addressed with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding.

“In the next two and half years, the remaining legacy TRU waste at the Savannah River Site will be disposed of or readied for shipment to WIPP. This important footprint reduction work is now being funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and will be completed more than seven years earlier than planned,” said Chuck Munns, President and CEO of SRNS.

The WIPP facility is located in southeastern New Mexico, 26 miles east of Carlsbad. WIPP’s facilities include disposal rooms excavated in an ancient, stable salt formation almost one-half mile underground (2,150 feet). WIPP's mission is to safely dispose of defense-related TRU waste from the research and development of nuclear weapons.

For additional information on the Department of Energy’s Office of Environmental Management and the Savannah River Site, can be found at <http://www.em.doe.gov> or <http://www.srs.gov>.

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