



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, September 1, 2009

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SRS Remains on Environmental Cleanup Cutting Edge with Recovery Act Project

Aiken, S.C. (Sept. 2) -- The Savannah River Site remains on the cutting edge of scientific research and new technology in the areas of environmental cleanup and remediation. Recently, these efforts have been put to use at the M-Area Chemical Oxidation Project, where chemical oxidants will be injected into the subsurface to demonstrate the potential for groundwater remediation in M-Area.

The treatability study focuses on a part of a 1600-acre plume that stretches across SRS's A- and M- Areas where trichloroethylene and tetrachloroethylene have been found in the groundwater.

Both contaminants were used at SRS as cleaning and degreasing solvents in many industrial areas. Scientists and engineers from Savannah River Nuclear Solutions and the Savannah River Ecology Lab have teamed up to study and potentially identify alternative methods of remediating solvent-contaminated groundwater.

The team will inject sodium persulfate, a type of salt, into a portion of the groundwater plume where it will chemically react with the lingering contaminants. The reaction will cause a breakdown of both the injected sodium persulfate and the solvent contaminants – causing them to literally consume one another – resulting in clean water.

To date, employees have been hard at work planning the injection process, installing monitoring wells and taking samples of the subsurface soils and groundwater to measure the existing contaminant levels in the treatment zone.

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"This study has the potential to benefit the Savannah River Site and beyond. Anytime we are able to put simple solutions to work to solve complex problems it is a win-win for industry and the environment," said Casey Knapp, project manager for new technology.

Often, traditional remediation systems that address large solvent plumes, like the one in M-Area, require intricate construction and costly maintenance and monitoring. At the conclusion of this demonstration, SRS hopes to identify a timely and cost effective means of remediation to accelerate cleanup at the Savannah River Site.

Injections are expected to begin in mid-September and the study will last approximately six months. The project is funded under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act.

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>. Follow SRS news on twitter also: www.twitter.com/SRSNews.

For more information about the SRS Recovery Act Project, please visit www.srs.gov/recovery.

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