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SRS P Area Remediation Project Nears Completion

Recovery Act Funds Used to Close Three Miles of Process Sewer Lines

AIKEN, S.C. — A \$2.3 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act project at the Savannah River Site (SRS) has rendered almost three miles of process sewer lines and associated manholes and structures closed off and inhabitable to animals, humans and storm water. The completed work prevents contamination migrating from previous reactor operations, spills and other events and making its way into the environment.

“Remediation of the P Area process sewer line is an important part of the closure of the P Area Operable Unit,” said Dr. David Moody, manager U.S. Department of Energy-Savannah River (DOE-SR). “With major structures and entry to the sewer lines closed, P Area is approaching total closure.”

The P Area process sewer line served that area and the P Reactor since the 1950s when the reactor began operations. Pipelines handling basic process water and noncontact cooling water were cross-connected with the storm water lines. The reactor was shut down in 1988. Since then, the process sewer lines, which range in diameter from 8 inches to 8 feet, have been abandoned.

The Recovery Act project, managed by Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS), remediated the process sewer lines and isolated fixed radiological contamination within the piping system. Isolation of the structures, manholes, and catch basins prevents access water flow through the system and contaminant migration. This process also prevents the mobilization of contaminants to the environment in the future, explained Project Manager Chris Bergren.

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Subcontractor Avisco Inc. filled structures and manholes with flowable fill concrete and environmental covers consisting of low-shrink concrete were placed on four of the five major structures. The process sewer lines vary from approximately 4 feet below ground surface near the reactor building to 25 feet below ground surface in areas away from the building.

Avisco used approximately 4,500 cubic yards of flowable fill and concrete to seal the access points to the process sewer lines and dispositioned 728,000 gallons of water. About 60,000 gallons of water were sent to the P Area Disassembly Basin for evaporation. The remaining water to be released to the discharge canal after sampling indicated it was safe to do so.

The P Area sewer line project follows the completion of similar work in R Area, though on a larger scale. Avisco worked in both areas concurrently, maximizing equipment and human resources. In R Area, 1,700 cubic yards of flowable fill concrete was used to fill manholes, other access points and three major structures, isolating two and a half miles of process sewer lines.

“Savannah River Nuclear Solutions is pleased that the P Area process sewer remediation project was performed safely and within schedule in the midst of heavy decommissioning projects in the area,” said Paul Hunt, vice president of the Recovery Act portfolio. “Completion of this major milestone moves us much closer to achieving total P Area cleanup, readying the area for possible reuse.”

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

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