

# News from the Savannah River Site

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Principal Media Contact: DT Townsend  
Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC  
803.952.7566  
[dt-lawrence.townsend@srs.gov](mailto:dt-lawrence.townsend@srs.gov)

DOE Media Contact: Bill Taylor  
803.952.8564  
[bill.taylor@srs.gov](mailto:bill.taylor@srs.gov)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## SRNS Dismantles Radioactive Waste Storage Facility

*Creative efficiencies and strong project management creates value during decommission and demolition effort*

AIKEN, S.C. (May 28, 2015) – U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) management and operations contractor Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) is using a variety of creative and highly efficient methods to dismantle and dispose of a 10,000 square foot building at the Savannah River Site (SRS), and in the process, drive down associated costs through strong project management practices.

One of the unusual methods used for this project involves a railroad boxcar that is no longer operational. It is now loaded with material and dismantled steel supports that formerly made up the walls and roof of the demolished building known as Pad 16. Using the salvaged boxcar as a waste storage container, SRNS avoided the purchase of eight additional “sea land” containers, each costing nearly \$4,000, to perform the same function.

In all, 18,500 square yards of wall and roofing material and 60,000 pounds of steel were removed for permanent disposal.

Another process efficiency associated with this effort involved gathering and using excess wooden pallets from across SRS that had been classified as low-level waste. Using these slightly contaminated pallets made securing and placing the Pad 16 material into the



*A former 10,000 square foot waste storage facility at SRS has been completely dismantled. In all, 18,500 square yards of wall and roofing material and 60,000 pounds of steel were removed for permanent disposal.*

box car for permanent disposition a more effective and faster process. This innovative idea also eliminated the storage of pallets that were no longer needed.

The Pad 16 structure formerly stored hundreds of 55-gallon drums containing radioactive trans-uranic (TRU) waste, most of which is now at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, a DOE disposal site in New Mexico. TRU waste consists of items normally found within an industrial setting that have become contaminated with radioisotopes that have a half-life greater than 20 years, such as plutonium. Tools, protective clothing, containers, rags and other debris would be typical examples.

The excess railroad boxcar and its Pad 16 contents have been classified as low-level waste and will be buried at SRS observing all regulatory requirements.

The next phase of this project involves the pouring of a thick concrete cap to seal the flooring that remains at Pad 16. This will create a surface that is designed to force rainwater to naturally flow off the new structure.

Approximately 450 cubic yards of concrete will be poured to create this protective cap.

In time, an engineered mound of fill dirt containing a continuous layer of clay will cover the interim concrete cap created for Pad 16.

“I really appreciate how we’ve come together as a team, dedicated to doing things smarter, safer and better while finding ways to cut costs,” said Solid Waste Operations Manager Don Turno. “We’re not just working with our feet and hands, but our heads as well through use of our expertise in project management strategy.”

The project is expected to be completed by July 31, six weeks ahead of the original schedule.

Pad 16 is the first of 15 buildings of this type within E Area at SRS that will eventually be dismantled as well.

*Savannah River Nuclear Solutions is a Fluor-led company whose members are Fluor Federal Services, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, including the Savannah River National Laboratory, located near Aiken, South Carolina.*

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SRNS- 2015 – 349