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For Immediate Release

## **SRS FACILITY CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL OPERATION**

AIKEN, S.C., (October 21, 2008) – The Savannah River Site’s Effluent Treatment Project (ETP) – the little facility that could – celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of operations today.

Small by most Savannah River Site (SRS) standards – 21,000-square-foot facility with 45 employees working around the clock – ETP treats on-site low-level radioactive wastewater until it meets the federal Clean Water Act standards. At that point, ETP releases the treated water to on-site streams. Before ETP was built, this wastewater was sent to on-site seepage basins.

The facility began operations on Oct. 21, 1988. Since that time, it has treated approximately 350 million gallons of water. ETP is part of the Site’s liquid waste operations, which is managed by the Washington Savannah River Company (WSRC). SRS is owned by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

Terrel Spears, Assistant Manager for Waste Disposition Project, DOE-Savannah River Operations Office, said ETP is a small but integral part of Liquid Waste operations at the Site.

“This facility, part of the integrated liquid waste process, plays a key role in SRS operations,” he said. “Without the wastewater processing conducted by ETP, other Site missions would be shut down or extremely limited. Its dependability means a lot of other missions can proceed.”

Hugh McGovern, WSRC’s ETP Facility Manager, said the facility doesn’t get a lot of attention, but employees do a good job of safely operating ETP.

“You can’t help but be impressed by the employees and how hard they work in this facility,” McGovern said. “ETP gets some sort of workout every week, but these employees are always up to the challenge.”

ETP receives the wastewater from the F and H Area separations and waste management facilities, F/H Laboratory Lab, the Savannah River National Laboratory, and miscellaneous sources, such as Soil and Groundwater Closure Projects well purge water. ETP removes chemical and radioactive contaminants before releasing the water into Upper Three Runs Creek, an SRS stream that flows to the Savannah River.

(more)

### **The WSRC Team:**

Washington Savannah River Company LLC • Bechtel Savannah River, Inc. • BNG America Savannah River Corporation  
BWXT Savannah River Company • CH2 Savannah River Company

Construction and operation of the ETP were approved and permitted by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) and the Environmental Protection Agency.

### **Construction**

Construction began in January 1987. ETP was designed and constructed to allow SRS to meet all environmental regulations associated with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System under the Clean Water Act. The total project cost was \$55 million. It costs approximately \$13 million a year to operate.

ETP is designed to process 100,000 to 250,000 gallons of low-level radioactive wastewater daily. The maximum permitted facility capacity is 430,000 gallons per day. The ETP encompasses wastewater collection and treatment operations that were modified for radioactive use. It was designed to remove heavy metals, organic chemicals and corrosive chemicals, as well as cesium and other radiological contaminants, from the wastewater.

### **Discharge**

ETP non-radiological effluents are discharged within limits of permits issued by SCDHEC. The radiological effluents are governed by the federal Clean Water Act. This law establishes a safe standard for drinking water of 4 millirem per year per person. Tritium releases from the ETP, when the Site was operating at maximum production, were projected to result in an effective dose of less than 2.2 percent of the standard. In 2007, actual discharge from ETP resulted in an effective dose of less than 0.025 percent (25 hundredths of 1 percent) of the standard.

All personnel operating ETP are certified by the South Carolina Environmental Certification Board. The operator in charge holds an "A" Physical/Chemical Wastewater Certificate, the highest level of certification granted by the board.

WSRC is a subsidiary of URS Corporation's Washington Division.