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For immediate release

Venting of Last Waste Drum Eliminates Potential Safety Issue

AIKEN, S.C. (July 31, 2008) – With the venting of last drum of transuranic (TRU) waste at the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Savannah River Site’s (SRS), potential safety issues have been eliminated.

Earlier this week, Washington Savannah River Company (WSRC) workers safely vented the last legacy TRU drum.

After an explosion at the Idaho National Laboratory two years ago, TRU drums across the DOE complex, including SRS, were considered potentially hydrogen flammable.

However, a venting system was put into place in 1996 at SRS to install vents in TRU drums in order to meet shipping requirements for drums destined for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico. The venting process measured and released any hydrogen trapped inside. Since then, nearly 16,000 drums have been safely and successfully vented.

“We always take safety seriously at SRS,” says WSRC President Leo Sain. “Although we did not have an apparent problem here, if these drums are a concern at one place, they’re a concern everywhere. Our workers did what was necessary to ensure the safety of the workers, the public and the environment.”

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The WSRC Team:

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