SRR Begins Liquid Tightness Testing on SDU 6

Savannah River Remediation (SRR) began performing a liquid tightness test this month on Saltstone Disposal Unit 6 (SDU 6), the first 30-million gallon, mega-volume salt waste disposal unit constructed at the Savannah River Site (SRS).

The purpose of the liquid tightness test is to qualify the newly constructed SDU 6 for use, and, therefore, will be safe to store solidified decontaminated salt waste at SRS. During the test, SDU 6 will be filled with water to check for potential leakage outside of the unit.

A permanent disposal unit for Saltstone, SDU 6 is a cylindrical concrete unit that is based on a design used commercially for storage of water and other liquids.

SRR began filling SDU 6 with water on October 12, 2015. The volume of water that will be put into SDU 6 is equivalent to the amount of water that would fill 55 Olympic-sized swimming pools. During the approximately 22-day water fill activity, the unit will be continuously checked for any signs of leakage visible on the exterior. If any damp spots are detected, they will be immediately repaired.

Once the water fill is complete, the liquid tightness test will be performed. This test will use both qualitative and quantitative means to demonstrate the unit is liquid tight. After the liquid tightness test is complete, which is expected to be in November, a dye/tracer will be introduced to the water in SDU 6. The bright, fluorescent red dye is certified by NSF International (the Public Health and Safety Organization) for use in drinking water and is commonly used in dye/tracer tests. The dye is being added as an additional means to confirm liquid tightness.

Finally, SDU 6 will be drained. The water will be pumped from SDU 6 to on-site drainage basins for a controlled discharge that will ultimately enter the Savannah River. Because this dye is environmentally friendly, there are no health, safety, or environmental concerns with discharging this dyed water in the SRS ecosystem or the Savannah River.
Aiken Tech Radiation Protection Technology Program Fills a Local Need

The Savannah River Site (SRS) will have a projected need of more than 162 Radiological Control Inspectors (RCI) by 2016 and a projected 192 Inspectors by 2017.

Since 2010, SRS has hired more than 40 Aiken Technical College (ATC) graduates into RCI positions, a number of them kick starting their careers at SRS during their last semester of the program by fulfilling a final internship requirement, an experience that gives the students a “real-world” opportunity to apply the theories learned in the classroom.

The Radiation Protection Technology program at ATC is essential to current and future missions at SRS, as the projected need for RCIs continues to rise due to healthy attrition rates and future work scopes, said Mark Schmitz, Savannah River Remediation (SRR) Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Project Manager.

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Site. Other than SRS, internship site options include VC Summer near Jenkinsville, South Carolina, or Plant Vogtle in Waynesboro, Georgia.

Alandria Johnson—who completed her internship at SRS this summer and is now hired full time—calls the Radiation Protection Technology program “the best two-year program around.”

“Radiological Control technicians will always be needed, especially in this area,” said Johnson, a Midland Valley native.

She added, “They can’t be replaced by computers or technology. It’s a growing field and has a good growth in salary. You really can find safety in a career at SRS—in terms of personal safety and job safety.”

Employees Gave Big at the SRR United Way Golf Tournament

This year’s SRR United Way Golf Tournament doubled in charitable earnings. With 31 teams and 124 golfers at Houndslake Country Club, SRR employees raised more than $6,800 for the SRR Employee United Way campaign, more than doubling last year’s tournament earnings.

More employee participation and increased sponsorship took the tournament earnings to a new level, said Mike Hubbard, the 2015 SRR Employee United Way Campaign Chairman.

“It was evident the SRR employees who participated came to the tournament to give, and they exceeded our expectations,” said Hubbard.

Employee donations were raised by golf entry fees, breakfast donations, mulligan purchases, and beverage donations. Corporate sponsors and community businesses gave donations as tournament sponsors, hole sponsors, and for prize gift donations.

Results like these are the kind Stuart MacVean, SRR President and Project Manager, was hoping for when the 2015 SRR Employee United Way campaign began in August.

“I challenged the SRR workforce in August to step up and make this year’s campaign the most successful it has ever been,” said MacVean. “I am proud of the SRR employees who gave their time and resources to the golf fundraiser and to the 2015 United Way Campaign.”