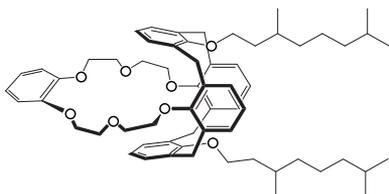


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equipment. Cleanup crews have so far retrieved more than 10,000 pounds of mercury, the DOE announced on January 26. The retrieved material was usually sent off-site to be treated for its subsequent storage.

Recently, instead of being sent to interim storage, a batch of nearly 1,200 pounds of mercury was shipped to Oak Ridge National Laboratory after being purified to laboratory-grade quality. It will be used by researchers in an experiment to determine physical properties for liquid metal flow. The data gained from this research will inform models for innovative concepts for material transfer and storage in a variety of fields.

SAVANNAH RIVER SITE

Full operations begin at Salt Waste Processing Facility

The hot commissioning testing phase of operations at the Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF) has been completed, signaling the facility's entrance into fully integrated operations with the other liquid waste facilities at the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site in South Carolina.

Radiation shielding, environmental emissions, and product waste acceptance requirements were all tested and validated during the commissioning phase of the SWPF, the DOE announced on January 19. The SWPF will treat the approximately 31 million gallons of remaining salt waste currently stored in underground tanks at SRS.

Parsons Corporation, the contractor that designed and built the first-of-a-kind facility, will operate the SWPF until January 2022. It is anticipated that the facility will process up to 6 million gallons of waste during the first year of operations.

Processing of the radioactive waste began in early October 2020, and by mid-November the SWPF had begun processing undiluted feed from Tank 49 in Savannah River's H Tank Farm. According to the DOE, all hot commissioning testing objectives were met on schedule and without incident. In total, more than 450,000 gallons of decontaminated salt solution have been transferred from the SWPF.

The startup of the SWPF is the last major piece of the liquid waste system at SRS and, according to the DOE, represents a significant leap forward in the department's ability to tackle the largest and one of its most challenging environmental risks—legacy radioactive tank waste. With the SWPF fully operational, it is expected that nearly all of the salt waste inventory at SRS will be processed by 2030.

More on the SWPF can be found in the article beginning on page 58.



An aerial view of the Salt Waste Processing Facility at the Savannah River Site. Photo: DOE

Source Points continues