04/06/11 MEMORANDUM FOR ALL EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY:
OPERATING IN THE ABSENCE OF APPROVED 2011 APPROPRIATIONS

Thanks to investments from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the next phase has begun on decommissioning the Heavy Water Components Test Reactor (HWCTR) at the Savannah River Site (SRS). With the reactor building now empty of its two steam generators and the reactor vessel, work can start on moving equipment into the empty vessel cavity and filling the below-grade portion of HWCTR with approximately 5,000 cubic yards of grout to prevent contaminants from reaching the groundwater.

“The HWCTR project is a good example of the many Recovery Act projects that are contributing to the 75-percent footprint reduction strategy for SRS,” said Candice Freeman, deputy federal projects director U.S. DOE-Savannah River. “Great care and careful planning have ensured the safe decommissioning of this piece of SRS history.”

On Feb. 1, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS), the management and operations contractor at SRS, used a 660-ton crane to remove HWCTR’s 174,000-pound dome. Over the past two weeks, the crane lifted out two 41,600-pound steam generators and the 220,000-pound reactor vessel, while a smaller crane rotated the equipment to a horizontal plane before easing the massive pieces to the ground. The generators and the reactor vessel have been moved to the Site’s burial ground in E Area for disposal... MORE>>