

Parsons makes progress on salt waste facility startup

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Parsons is continuing to make progress in the startup of the Salt Waste Processing Facility at the Savannah River Site, completing a series of systems tests this summer on the way to beginning operations in 2019.

Parsons has completed the last of 60 individual systems tests as well as five important tests of integrated systems, paving the way for chemicals to be introduced into the plant as part of the next phase of commissioning by the end of the year.

“The plant has really performed well during this testing phase, and we are safely and efficiently getting SWPF ready to operate,” said Frank Sheppard, Parsons senior vice president and SWPF Project Manager. “I’m proud of our workforce and their focus on safe execution. We are working in partnership with the Department of Energy to solve any issues that emerge, and we’re excited to bring this important facility into operation to support the vital missions here at SRS.”

Parsons completed construction of SWPF in April 2016, more than eight months ahead of the target schedule and more than \$65 million under the target cost.

Since then, the project has been focused on testing and commissioning, in which components and systems are rigorously tested to ensure they meet DOE’s strict safety and design requirements for waste processing.

Once operational, SWPF will process the majority of the site’s salt waste inventory by treating highly radioactive salt solutions stored in underground tanks at SRS at 10 times the rate it is being processed today.

Removing salt waste, which fills over 90 percent of tank space in the SRS tank farms, is a major step toward emptying and closing the site’s remaining 43 high-level waste tanks.

Notably, Parsons is set to complete construction of SWPF’s Next-Generation Solvent facility by the end of October and complete testing by the end of December, at which point the facility will stay in stand-by mode until the full plant starts up in 2019.

Deploying the Next-Generation Solvent in the Salt Waste Processing Facility will increase processing rates to 12 million gallons per year, twice the baseline plan for the plant.

“This is just another example of how we are delivering innovation to this project to emphasize safety and maximize throughput,” Sheppard said, noting that the training qualifications and procedure development are also proceeding well. “Our workforce at all levels is really rising to the occasion.”



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