



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Roger Nelson, (575) 234-7213

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 24, 2009

For Immediate Release

**REMOTE-HANDLED TRU WASTE SHIPMENTS
FROM SAVANNAH RIVER SITE ARRIVE SAFELY AT WIPP**

CARLSBAD, N.M. – The U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) Carlsbad Field Office announced that the first two shipments of remote-handled transuranic (TRU) waste from the Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina have arrived safely at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP).

In addition to the initial remote-handled TRU waste shipments, WIPP has received 976 contact-handled TRU waste shipments from SRS since 2001, underscoring DOE’s pledge to clean up defense radioactive wastes from generator sites around the country.

“Working with SRS and our regulators we continue to make consistent progress on environmental cleanup. Many capable people have worked for months to make these shipments possible. I want to congratulate everyone involved for a job well done,” said Dr. Dave Moody, Carlsbad Field Office manager.

SRS obtained final approvals in March from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the New Mexico Environment Department and the DOE Carlsbad Field Office to certify and ship remote-handled TRU waste to WIPP. The agencies reviewed waste records, waste examination processes and equipment to

ensure remote-handled TRU wastes from SRS meet federal and state disposal standards at WIPP.

The remote-handled waste shipped from SRS this week originated at the Battelle-Columbus Site in Ohio, which is now decommissioned. With prior approval by the state of South Carolina, the waste was transferred to SRS in 2006 for eventual transport and final disposal at WIPP. The DOE Savannah River Site near Aiken, S.C., was constructed in the early 1950s to produce materials for the fabrication of nuclear weapons in support of the nation's defense programs.

The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant is a DOE facility designed to safely isolate defense-related transuranic waste. Waste temporarily stored at sites around the country is shipped to WIPP and permanently disposed in rooms mined out of an ancient salt formation 2,150 feet below the surface. WIPP, which began waste disposal operations in 1999, is located 26 miles outside of Carlsbad, N.M.

-DOE-

006DR0409