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FIRST TRUPACT-III SHIPMENT ARRIVES SAFELY AT THE WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT

Washington, D.C. – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced today that the first shipment of transuranic waste using the newly approved shipping package known as the TRUPACT-III safely arrived at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) near Carlsbad, New Mexico. The shipment, which originated at the Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina, arrived at WIPP on August 25. The new shipping package – the Transuranic Package Transporter Model 3 or TRUPACT-III – allows the Department to package and ship large-sized transuranic waste in a single box that would otherwise have to be broken down into smaller waste boxes. This new shipping package will help accelerate the pace of cleanup at sites across the country, while reducing risk to worker safety.

“This announcement is a clear example of how ongoing innovations within the Environmental Management program are helping to increase the efficiency of our operations, speed our cleanup efforts at Cold War sites across the country, and improve safety,” said Dave Huizenga, DOE’s Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management.

Transuranic waste consists of materials such as clothing, tools, rags, residues, soil, debris, and other materials contaminated with plutonium or other hazardous chemicals. It can either be handled directly (contact-handled) or remotely (remote-handled). The TRUPACT-III shipping package allows the loading of large-sized transuranic waste into a single box, instead of repackaging it into smaller waste boxes. This will allow for faster processing and shipping, while significantly reducing the chance of potential exposure to the workers that are preparing the waste to be shipped to WIPP.

The TRUPACT-III will be used to ship large box waste at SRS as part of the site’s American Recovery and Reinvestment Act work to complete its legacy transuranic waste program. In the future, the TRUPACT-III may also be used at other sites that have large transuranic box waste, such as the Hanford Site in Washington State, the Idaho National Laboratory, and the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico. Large-sized

transuranic waste includes contaminated glove boxes, used motors, and large-scale analytical equipment.

The design and manufacturing of the TRUPACT-III was completed with \$12 million in funding from the Recovery Act.

WIPP is a DOE facility designed to safely dispose of legacy transuranic waste from the Cold War to protect people and the environment. Transuranic waste is permanently disposed in rooms mined out of a salt formation 2,150 feet below the surface. WIPP, which began waste disposal operations in 1999, is located 26 miles outside of Carlsbad, New Mexico.

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