

Idaho Waste Treatment Facility Startup Testing Suspended To Evaluate System

IDAHO FALLS, ID- On Saturday, June 16, startup testing was suspended at the Integrated Waste Treatment Unit (IWTU) located at the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho Site. Testing and plant heat-up was suspended to allow detailed evaluation of a system pressure event observed during testing on Saturday.



Integrated Waste Treatment Unit (IWTU)

Facility startup testing has been ongoing for the past month, evaluating system and component operation and response during operating conditions. No radioactive or hazardous waste has been introduced into the facility, pending successful completion of startup testing. Safety systems functioned as designed, and the facility is currently in safe standby mode. The facility is expected to remain in safe standby condition for the next several weeks as the facts surrounding Saturday's system pressure event are gathered and evaluated.

The IWTU was designed and constructed to treat 900,000 gallons of liquid sodium-bearing waste located at the Idaho Nuclear Technology and Engineering Center's (INTEC) tank farm. The waste was generated during spent nuclear fuel reprocessing activities performed at INTEC from the 1950s until 1992. Treatment was expected to begin this month, but will be delayed for several weeks pending a thorough evaluation of system performance. The State of Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, who has regulatory authority for oversight of the IWTU, has been notified.