

Media Advisory

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For Immediate Release

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Update on DOE's Savannah River Site Plutonium "Pit" Bomb Core Plant, Day after Court-Authorized Bomb-Plant Tour by Public Interest Groups

WHAT: Press briefing following an April 21 inspection of the proposed Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility, as stipulated in an historic legal "[settlement agreement](#)." Update on just-released [draft environmental review of pit production](#) and report on massive budget request by DOE for FY27.

WHO: Plaintiffs Savannah River Site Watch, Nuclear Watch New Mexico and Tri-Valley CAREs (Livermore, CA), represented by the South Carolina Environmental Law Project (SCELPE). The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) is their scientific consultant. These groups will be on the pit plant tour.

WHEN: Wednesday, April 22, 2026, 9:00 am EST/6:00 am PT.

WHERE: South Carolina State House, first floor, Columbia, SC. It will also be livestreamed on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/VVjm1JrnJU4>. The public is welcome to attend.

WHY: Plutonium "pits" are the core of all U.S. nuclear weapons. The Department of Energy's semi-autonomous National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) is seeking to expand production to at least 30 plutonium pits per year at the Los Alamos Lab in New Mexico and at least 50 pits per year at the Savannah River Site, near Aiken, SC, which has never produced pits. NNSA pushed forward with the project without proper review, in violation of the National Environmental Policy Act. Plaintiffs sued in federal court in Columbia, SC and won, requiring the NNSA to complete a nationwide Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS), with public hearings to be held this May. The court-ordered "settlement agreement" also required an inspection of the Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility by plaintiffs to ensure that no production begins before the completion of the final PEIS. Pit production generates a host of radioactive waste streams, some of which would be disposed of in trenches at SRS, and poses public safety concerns, such as plutonium criticality and plutonium fires. No future pit production is to maintain the safety and reliability of the existing stockpile. Instead it is for new-design nuclear weapons that could prompt a return to testing.

The Draft PEIS was released by NNSA on April 10, 2026 with a 90-day public comment period now beginning and a May 5 public meeting in N. Augusta, SC:
<https://www.energy.gov/nepa/articles/doeeis-0573-draft-environmental-impact-statement-april-2026>

To help inform the public, plaintiffs and UCS have kicked off a Pit PEIS website: <https://pitpeis.com/>

The SRS pit plant will be the most expensive buildings ever built in the USA, with a current DOE estimate of around \$30 billion. The [recent DOE budget request for FY 27](#) (page 17) reveals a huge jump in pit-plant funding. New plutonium pits would be used for new nuclear weapons, fueling a nuclear arms race. In their press briefing, plaintiffs and counsel will report on their inspection of the SRS pit plant, call for the public release of an internal DOE report critiquing the troubled pit production program and discuss the NNSA's failure to adequately analyze pit aging and pit reuse issues.

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