

Space station crew gets rid of trash

July 12 2007

The International Space Station crew is preparing for the arrival of another Russian cargo spacecraft by discarding no longer needed items.

The discarded hardware and miscellaneous items are being loaded into the Progress 24 cargo craft that will be cast off Aug. 1, to eventually be incinerated when it enters the Earth's atmosphere. With all trash gathered and stowed from the U.S. side, cosmonaut Oleg Kotov is now collecting and stowing waste from the Russian segment.

The jettison of Progress 24 will make room at the space station's Pirs docking compartment for the Aug. 5 arrival of the Progress 26 cargo vehicle.

In other space station procedures, Astronaut Clay Anderson activated a new Oxygen Generation System, or OGS, in the U.S. lab Wednesday, augmenting the ability to produce oxygen for the complex from the Russian Elektron system.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration controllers in Houston said the new system will be vital in supporting a six-person ISS crew beginning in the spring of 2009. Activities also performed from the ground this week included powering up the oxygen rack, configuring the software and testing a timer, followed by several hours of evaluation.

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Citation: Space station crew gets rid of trash (2007, July 12) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2007-07-space-station-crew-trash.html>

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