

Orbital Sciences to launch Antares rocket Saturday

April 20 2013



This NASA photo, obtained October 2, 2012, shows Orbital Sciences Corporation's Antares rocket as it rolls out to the launch pad at NASA's Wallops Flight Facility. Orbital Sciences, one of two private US firms chosen by NASA to shuttle cargo to the International Space Station, will make a new attempt Saturday to launch a first test flight of its Antares rocket.

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The new planned launch, which the company announced on Friday, came after an attempt was scrubbed on Wednesday because of technical problems.

The new launch time is set for 5 pm (2100 GMT) Saturday from the Wallops flight facility on an island off the coast of the state of Virginia, some 170 miles (270 kilometers) from Washington.

If for some reason it is not possible to carry out Saturday's launch, the company could make an attempt Sunday at the same time, officials at Orbital Sciences said.

The Antares rocket, a two-stage [launch vehicle](#) 131 feet (40 meters) tall and 12.8 feet (3.9 meters) in diameter, is set to hit an orbit of 155 miles (249 kilometers) some 10 minutes after take-off.

A \$1.9 billion contract requires Orbital Sciences to deliver freight to the ISS over the course of eight flights by the beginning of 2016.

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