

DOE clarifies nuke waste study

The federal Department of Energy has not made any decision to turn the former Lake Ontario Ordinance Works in Lewiston into a regional disposal center for radioactive wastes, the agency said Friday.

Publication in the Niagara Gazette Wednesday of a federal consultant's recommendation that the LOOW be used to dispose of radioactive wastes from other areas aroused a storm of protest in the Town of Lewiston this week.

The federal DOE released an official press release on the matter, stating that the reactivation of the site, where wastes from the Manhattan project are stored, is only one of a "wide range of options" being evaluated for the site.

These options extend "from complete decontamination and unrestricted release of the site for other uses to permanent stabilization of those radioactive wastes now on the site, and possibly other wastes from nearby states," the DOE said in a prepared release.

The study is being reviewed by the DOE and will be made available to the public when completed, the agency said.

"Before any decision will be made for permanent actions at (the LOOW site), DOE will carefully evaluate the environmental, safety and other impacts of all reasonable alternatives," the DOE said, adding that local groups will be allowed to participate in the decision.