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Lewiston to seek counsel on possible

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LEWISTON — Town Attorney Benjamin N. Hewitt says he will contact a Washington, D.C., law firm to determine the town's chance of success if it decide to sue the federal government over plans for the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works.

If the town finds it has a case against the government, Hewitt said, he will recommend the town contract a Washington-based firm to represent Lewiston residents.

"I don't think I'm qualified to handle it," Hewitt said. "I'm not an environmental lawyer."

The town is considering legal action

against the federal Department of Energy to prevent the DOE from developing a low-level radioactive waste repository at the ordnance works site on Pletcher Road.

Let's fight together: DeGolier

YOUNGSTOWN — The head of an environmental group here hopes to form a coalition of other organizations to battle a proposed radioactive waste repository in nearby Lewiston.

Danielle DeGolier, president of Citizens Against Pollution, said she has asked 15 area groups to attend a meeting at 7 p.m. Monday at Lewiston Town Hall to discuss the coalition proposal.

"We first have to find if there are strong grounds for a suit," Hewitt said. "And we have to see if we have the funds to pay a firm."

The focus of the environmentalists' attention is the U.S. Department of Energy's tentative plan to convert the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works into a regional waste center. The site has been used for radioactive waste disposal since 1944.

Ms. DeGolier also said the groups would be invited to attend a protest rally at 2 p.m. Dec. 1 at the Pletcher Road gate of the former ordnance plant.

LOOW plan suit

Town Board members Richard Kolke, Alvin Ogg and Joan Gipp on Monday agreed hiring a firm familiar with environmental law would in the town's best interest. Board member Robert E. Lee was unavailable for comment Monday evening.

Supervisor James J. Lombardi also said he would agree with Hewitt's recommendations.

The members said they would wait for Hewitt's recommendation before deciding whether to pursue a lawsuit.

The DOE owns the property, now called the Niagara Falls Storage Site. The property was used to store radioactive residues from the 1940s Manhattan Project.