

# Waste dumping angers, but it's

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Reports that the federal government illegally dumped liquid wastes into Lake Ontario from the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works site in Lewiston have raised the ire — but not the eyebrows — of local officials and environmentalists.

"We had suspected improprieties at the site for years," Danielle DeGulier, president of Citizens Against Pollution, said Saturday. "This has simply confirmed it for us."

John Spagnoli, regional director for the state Department of Environmental conservation, said Friday that Bechtel National Inc., caretakers of the site for the

U.S. Department of Energy, discharged 700,000 gallons of liquid waste into a ditch leading to Lake Ontario on Nov. 11 without permission from the DEC.

The federal government has used the Lewiston site for the storage and disposal of radioactive materials since 1944.

Bechtel had asked for permission on Dec. 9 to discharge the waste. Spagnoli said permission was denied until the company could provide more information about the quality of the collected waste water.

Spagnoli said he has directed attorneys to take "appropriate legal action" against the DOE for the apparent violation.

News of the dumping came as no

surprise to two Town of Lewiston officials.

"I'm not surprised. They have abused our land and water for 40 years," said Councilman Joan E. Gipp.

Furthermore, Gipp said she believes the action may help the town's battle to prevent the DOE from converting the LOOW site to a regional radioactive waste repository.

The reported illegal discharge "certainly has brought home to the people the lack of credibility and integrity of Bechtel," Gipp said.

She also said she believes the town may have grounds for a lawsuit against the company because of the violation.

Town Attorney Benjamin N. Hewitt

## no surprise

could not be reached for comment.

Councilman Alvin C. Ogg also appeared to take the news of the dumping in stride.

"I wasn't totally surprised by what was published (about the dumping)," he said. He said he already had an idea of what took place before it was reported.

Ogg said Bechtel and the DOE "blatantly thumbed their noses" at the DEC and county residents by dumping without the DEC's permission.

He said he couldn't predict what effect the incident will have on the repository issue.

"We are convinced of the fact that we don't want a repository here," Ogg said.

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## Réaction

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Reports of the dumping also drew responses from environmentalists on both sides of the American-Canadian border.

"I can't imagine anyone discharging deliberately into the (Niagara) river or the lake," said Margherita Howe, chairman of the Canadian chapter of Operation Clean.

Dell Rowles of Youngstown, president of the Lake Ontario Trout and Salmon Association, pre-

dicted area fishing groups will form a coalition to pressure federal officials into stopping dumping incidents.

"Any discharge getting into the lake or river will harm the fish," Rowles said.

Art Buckley of Grand Island, a member of LOTSA and the Niagara River Angler's Association, said such discharges are hurting the state's program of stocking area waterways.

"Pollution give us all a black eye," he said.