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LOOW cleanup pegged at \$100 million

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Removal of all radioactive wastes from the government's Lake Ontario Ordnance Works in Lewiston could cost as much as \$100 million, federal Energy Secretary Donald Hodel said.

In a letter received yesterday by Rep. John J. LaFalce, D-Tonawanda, Hodel said complete cleanup and decontamination of the Lewiston site was one of two alternatives under consideration by energy officials.

"In addition to the establishment of a suitable disposal site acceptable to the host state, decontamination of the site would require the appropriation of up to \$100 million by Congress," Hodel wrote.

The other option would be to stabilize the 16,000 tons of radioactive waste and

leave it in Lewiston, Hodel said.

Hodel said a consultant's recommendation to use the Pletcher Road site as a regional waste disposal center had been ruled out by his department. The letter did not say whether the Department of Energy would consider using the site for radioactive wastes now located in other parts of the state.

The consultant, Bechtel National Inc., earlier had recommended use of the site as a state or regional radioactive waste repository.

"The department has not accepted (Bechtel's) recommendations," Hodel wrote, adding that Bechtel had been ordered to explore additional alternatives for the disposal of the wastes from Lewiston and other sites in the state.

Hodel said an engineering report ex-

ploring disposal options for the Lewiston wastes would be completed by March 1983. An environmental assessment of the options would be completed by September 1983, he said.

"Pending a final decision," Hodel wrote, "we plan to complete the measures now under way...to improve the storage conditions for the wastes now onsite and the cleanup of surrounding properties as expeditiously as possible, but no later than 1984."

Energy officials are planning a series of meetings next Tuesday in Lewiston to discuss the former ordnance site with town officials and area residents. The former ordnance plant has been used for radioactive materials storage and disposal since 1944.

Energy officials said they will travel to Albany on Dec. 20 to discuss the Lewiston site with state officials.