

# Oak Ridge Crowd Unanimous: Don't Import Nuclear Waste

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**OAK RIDGE** — It was a fairly small crowd, as public hearings go, but the message was unanimous.

Don't bring any more nuclear waste to Oak Ridge.

Oak Ridge is among several sites being considered for long-term storage of about 250,000 cubic yards of nuclear waste now housed near Niagara Falls, N.Y.

The radioactive materials, generated during the World War II development of the atomic bomb, are a combination of residues left from processing of uranium ores and soils contaminated by it.

About 50 persons attended last night's meeting, and most of the speakers favored leaving the waste where it is. One person, however, said it should be shipped to the government's Nevada Test Site, which is not one of the options being considered.

"I do not support any effort that would make Roane County the 'dumping ground' for waste already located at the Niagara Falls site," said Roane County Executive Ken

Yager. "Leave the waste where it is, rather than contaminate other areas of the country and increase the risk of contamination in five other states by transporting it almost a thousand miles, from New York to Tennessee."

State Rep. Randy McNally said he is opposed because of the tremendous cost of bringing it to Oak Ridge and because of possible environmental problems it would create.

McNally said it "would be an unwarranted waste of taxpayer dollars."

DOE is considering keeping the waste at its present location; trucking it to government sites in Oak Ridge or Richland, Wash.; separating the wastes and sending the residues to Oak Ridge or Richland and keeping the rest at Niagara Falls; or separating the wastes and dumping part of it in the Atlantic Ocean.

The proposed Oak Ridge site is on a series of knolls atop Pine Ridge near the Oak Ridge Gaseous Diffusion Plant. The area is in the Roane County section of the city.

While the uranium residues account for only 6 percent of the vol-

ume, they contain 99 percent of the waste's radioactivity, a draft report said.

Kingston Mayor Ruby Lucky, citing the small turnout at last night's meeting, said residents in the area have become too complacent about nuclear materials and waste because they've worked around it so long.

"Don't make us the garbage heap of the whole country," she said.

Mike Walker, research and budget director for the city of Oak Ridge, reiterated the city's opposition to locating the waste here. Among other things, he said it might hamper industrial recruitment because the proposed location is considered a potential site for future development.

Other area residents, such as Susan Williams, said the trucking of waste here would create traffic congestion and damage local roads. DOE has said it would take 16,000 truckloads to bring all of the Niagara Falls waste to Oak Ridge.

The meeting at the American Museum of Science & Energy lasted 50 minutes. DOE will accept written comments on the proposal until Oct. 9.