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N-Wastes To Remain In Lewiston

The U.S. Department of Energy today announced that it has decided to keep radioactive-contaminated soils at the Niagara Falls Storage Site, formerly known as the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works, in Lewiston.

Energy officials who issued the formal decision said a 40-acre waste area will be covered and capped, a move they say is the least costly alternative to store the wastes.

The decision to provide long-term storage of the nuclear wastes at the 190-acre site rather than move the wastes to federal storage sites in Oak Ridge, Tenn., or Richland, Wash., is subject to continuing review by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that the storage meets their guidelines.

In announcing the decision, the Energy Department said: "This project is expected to be implemented in the next 5 to 10 years, based on fund availability and other priorities"

The department said an interim waste containment facility will be completed this fall to store the radioactive material and protect the public health and safety pending completion of the project.

The storage project includes steps to isolate 15,000 cubic yards of nuclear residues left over from World War II development of the atomic bomb, plus 250,000 cubic yards of other contaminated wastes and soils.

The department said "in-place management is the environmentally preferred alternative. . . . In addition it is far less costly than other alternatives."