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## Plant site may harbor explosives

*Old ordnance works  
near Falls is targeted*

*From Wire and Staff Reports*

NIAGARA FALLS — A Niagara County wartime defense plant is among 259 nationwide sites the government believes still may harbor aging explosives or munitions, a review of military records has revealed.

The Lake Ontario Ordnance Works, which once made TNT and stored hazardous wastes from the atom bomb research project, is listed in a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers inventory done Feb. 1 for a planned cleanup effort.

There were no details on the government's targeting of the facility, now known as the Niagara Falls Storage Site.

The site, formerly a 50-building, 191-acre TNT production complex that looked like a dairy farm, is about four miles from Parker and Ransomville roads in the Town of Lewiston.

The site, the center of a cluster that includes CWM Chemical Services and Modern Disposal Services Inc. facilities along with a former Bell Aircraft rocket engine test site, already has been the target of cleanup work.

The U.S. Department of Energy completed a \$40 million remediation project at the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works late in 1991, clearing the way for an auction to sell parts of the 191-acre site.

About 3,700 cubic yards of contaminated soil and 53 barrels of waste were buried under 18 inches of topsoil and two feet of clay in the project.

The remediation effort centered on several mysterious substances — called K-65, L-30, L-50 and F-32 — shipped to the complex after the War Department shut down TNT production in 1944.

The low-level radioactive wastes came from the Manhattan Project, America's top-secret effort to build an atomic bomb.

Cleanup of the ordnance and explosive waste sites is estimated to cost an estimated \$398 million, with work at more than 1,500 other sites with toxic or radioactive waste bringing the total cost to more than \$2 billion. Another 3,000 sites are yet to be analyzed, with a project cleanup cost of \$4 billion by the year 2010.

Officials have proposed 1,777 projects scattered among all 50 states and several U.S. territories for immediate cleanup. There are 268 projects at 259 sites with suspected explosives, including the Niagara County site, and the rest have various forms of chemical contamination.

## ► ENVIRONMENT



## Lewiston site on danger list

*Staff and wire reports*

TOWN OF LEWISTON — A local environmentalist hopes the inclusion of the old Lake Ontario Ordnance Works on a list of sites possibly containing dangerous materials may be the first step to cleaning it up.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers listed the Ordnance Works while surveying nearly 7,600 former defense sites that may still have buried explosives, toxic wastes and chemical agents.

The Lake Ontario Ordnance Works, a 190-acre site north of Swann Road between Harold Road and Porter Center Road, was used to produce TNT in the early days of World War II, then used as a dump for radioactive waste generated by the Manhattan Project.

"There has never been a definitive account of the munitions stored" at the area, now called the Niagara Falls Storage Site, said Timothy Henderson, president of Residents Organized for Lewiston-Porter's Environment.

Henderson said he thinks the community has always been uneasy with the idea of a munitions plant.