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**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1993**

—Joan Gipp,  
former Lewiston Town Councilwoman

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Niagara  
GAZETTE

# Radioactive fallout: Dump plan raises fears

## Lewiston wastes may stay

By Mary Wozniak  
Niagara Gazette

The Department of Energy has dropped another bomb nearly 50 years after the first atomic blast.

The fallout is yet to come.

The department has given notice that it wants to go ahead with what it says is the best option to permanently deal with a site in Lewiston full of radioactive waste and residues from the Manhattan Project, which created the first atomic bomb:

Give it a final cap and leave it there. Forever.

But the entities being notified and responding to the energy department's intent are other federal and state government agencies, not the people in the community.

"I'm appalled, because we had been promised permanent and safe storage somewhere else," said Joan Gipp, an environmentalist who was a Lewiston councilwoman at the time a cleanup of the site — completed in 1986 — was taking place. She fought against keeping the waste at the site.

A letter obtained by the Gazette dated May 10, 1993, was sent by the energy department to the Environmental Protection Agency. It announced the energy department's intent to move ahead with installing a final cap on the 255,000 cubic yards of radioactive waste and residue at the 191-acre Niagara Falls Storage Site, near Lutts and Pletcher roads.

The Environmental Protection Agency reacted strongly to the letter, objecting to the proposed final disposition of the wastes. So did the state Department of Health and the state Department of Environmental Conservation.

The opposing agencies say the current standard in use at the site is not good enough for long-term, on-site management of the high-level radioactive residues there. The only answer, they say, is removing the residues to a high-level radioactive waste repository, when one is built.

The EPA and an energy department official downplayed the conflict shown in the letters, calling it nothing more than a "friendly discussion."



James Neiss/Niagara Gazette

**DRAWING THE LINE:** Former Lewiston Town Councilwoman Joan Gipp stands in front of the Pletcher Road site where radioactive Manhattan Project waste was dumped. She is strongly opposed to leaving the waste at that site.

## Plan splits community

### DISAGREEMENTS:

*Agencies have different views, so it's no surprise that residents do, too.*

By Mary Wozniak  
Niagara Gazette

State and federal agencies disagree about the wisdom of the federal Department of Energy's plan to put a final cap on a quarter-million cubic yards of radioactive waste and residue in Lewiston.

In fact, the environmental enforcement arm of the federal government says the only solution is to transport the residue to a high-level radioactive waste repository. But there is none in the United States.

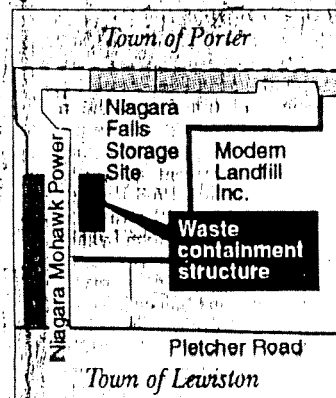
So it's no wonder that as area residents get wind of the plan, they also don't see eye-to-eye on the best solution.

"It's (already) encapsulated," said Richard Jackson of 1162 Pletcher Road, who lives a quarter-mile to a half-mile away from

### MANHATTAN PROJECT RESIDUE

What's buried at the Niagara Falls Storage Site in Lewiston:

- Roughly two pounds of radium, or one-third of the world's mined supply.
- 250,000 cubic yards of radioactively contaminated materials (soil and sludge).
- 15,000 cubic yards of high-level residues from the processing of uranium ores. Most significant of these is 3,200 cubic yards of residues code-named K-65 wastes, with a half-life of 1,600 years.
- Dead animals used in testing to arrive at standards for radiation exposure:
  - 100 hamsters
  - 200 monkeys
  - 675 dogs
  - 1,200 rabbits
  - 20,000 rats
  - 277,400 mice



Source: Niagara Gazette, Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, EPA status report on site.

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Please see **Proposal 3A**

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