

U.S. aides vow disposal plan

LEWISTON — After touring sites containing hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of buried radioactive waste here and in the Town of Tonawanda, federal officials said Monday that they remained committed to finding acceptable long-term solutions to disposal of the material.

Thomas P. Grumbly, assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy, said citizens will be asked to comment on whether a permanent clay cap should be installed at the 25-acre storage cell at the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works, now known as the Niagara Falls Storage Site, 1397 Pletcher Road. He said 250,000 cubic yards of waste is stored there.

Grumbly told public officials in the Town of Tonawanda he wants to develop a remediation plan with them by December 1996 for dealing with the 350,000 cubic yards of radioactive waste at four sites in that town. A \$14.6 million cleanup of radioactive waste at the former Linde plant, now owned by Praxair off Sheridan Drive, has already started. The waste in Lewiston and the Town of Tonawanda was generated by the Manhattan Project, which produced the world's first atomic bomb during World War II.

Rep. John J. LaFalce, D-Town of Tonawanda, who arranged Grumbly's visit here, said "a plan that makes it clear we're on a fixed path to total cleanup" needs to be developed by local and federal officials. Grumbly said he wants to begin work on that plan in the spring.