

**PORTER**

# Corps says it lacks funds to complete LOOW cleanup

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PORTER — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, citing cost overruns, says its program has come up short by \$860,000 for cleaning up contaminants at the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works.

Ray Pilon, project manager, told the Restoration Advisory Board Wednesday evening that \$425,000 was recently made available to the Corps of Engineers to continue its work through the fiscal year.

"We don't have enough money to finish the project," Pilon said, "but now we do have enough money to continue through the end of September. We are trying to get enough money to finish the

job." The agency hopes to get another \$500,000 from the federal government in the new year, Pilon said. If it fails, he added, the contractors will be instructed to seal up their work and leave the site safe until funding is available to finish the project.

"No money, no money — that's all we ever hear," said Kent Johnson of the state Department of Environmental Conservation. "This program has some serious management problems."

Several board members representing the community voiced concerns about the safety of the former ordnance works, going back to World War II and the days of TNT explosives. No explosives remain there, but various types of contaminants are being monitored, including some radioactive materials at the Niagara Falls Storage

Site. The restoration work consists of two programs — securing the Niagara Falls Storage Site, for which Pilon said funding is not a problem, and removal of an old TNT pipeline and chemical sewer line, which contains volatile organic compounds and is about 60 percent complete.

The meeting was held at the Lewiston-Porter Central School complex, about a mile away from the 7,500-acre government property bounded by Balmer Road on the north, Porter Center Road on the East, Swann Road on the south and Lutts Road on the west.

Earlier in the day, members of the Restoration Advisory Board took a three-hour tour of the property.

Among those in the small audience was Sandra J. Maslen, who won the Republican primary in

Lewiston Tuesday and will face Democratic Supervisor Richard F. Demus in the November elections.

"It's overwhelming," she later said of the contamination problem. "I am terribly concerned that they haven't made an effort to secure that property. Young people have been going through the fence."

Some members of the advisory board also expressed concern about the unfinished work on the property, asking whether liability for an accident would be shared by federal and local governments.

At one point Martin Hodgins of Lewiston, a member of the advisory board, demanded that before millions more are spent on the cleanup, a study be taken of cancer deaths in a seven-mile radius that might be linked to the contamination on the property.