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LEWISTON

Lake Ontario Ordnance workers slow to be interviewed

By PAM KOWALIK
News Niagara Bureau
7/13/00

LEWISTON - Representatives of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers updated the public Wednesday evening on the cleanup at the site of the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works.

Corps spokeswoman Arleen Kreusch told the crowd of about 20 that although she has been contacted by at least one man, few have responded to a request that people who worked at the site between 1940 and 1986 allow themselves to be interviewed as part of Corps' plans to conduct a study on the health histories of former employees.

William E. Kowalewski, project engineer for the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works, said a \$1.6 million contract was awarded in May to Severson Environmental to remove the remaining underground pipelines on the Chemical Waste Management portion of the property.

In addition, the workers will collect about 100 soil and sediment samples for lab analysis before the pipes are removed, to confirm the presence or absence of chemical contamination inside and outside of the pipes.

"The objective of this project is to remove these lines and be done with the project once and for all," he added. "We expect excavation to begin in the next few weeks."

A company is also sampling the ground and water and wastes of the ordnance works to assess potential environmental impacts to the site. EA Engineering & Science of Baltimore is doing that work for \$2.3 million. The firm is supposed to prepare a report of the findings between September and December.

The site of the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works, which straddles the towns of Lewiston and Porter, was originally farmland that was turned into a research and dumping ground during the World War II-era Manhattan Project, which developed the atomic bomb.

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