

Porter folks worried about student safety

By Susan Mikula Campbell

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PORTER — Concerns by residents over health effects on current and former students of Lewiston-Porter schools dominated the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works Restoration Advisory Board meeting Wednesday night.

In the end, the board asked for a report at its next meeting on whether additional sampling could legally be done around the school area and any extra information that could be shared with the community.

The LOOW site in Lewiston and Porter is roughly bordered by Creek, Porter Center, Balmer and Pletcher Roads. Part of the site was used by the Army during World War II to manufacture TNT. Part of it is the Niagara Falls Storage Site off Pletcher Road, where Manhattan Project radioactive waste was stored until the late 1950s.

Judith Leithner of the Buffalo District Army Corps of Engineers, which is doing testing at the Niagara Falls Storage Site, said the area behind the Lew-Port campus is considered a buffer zone and no records show any radioactive materials in the

buffer zone.

"We're not talking about a prison being located next to this hazardous waste. It's a school," Youngstown resident Lynn Zinardi protested.

Janet Mitchell attended the former Lew-Port school buildings at Lutts and Balmer roads in the general LOOW area. They were used by the school district until the late 1960s and are located on what is now Chemical Waste Management property. Fellow classmates have health concerns, she said. "The more I learn, the more I get scared."

Chris Hallam, Corps health physicist, reported on the radiation survey done this summer at the Niagara Falls Storage Site. Several dozen locations were found with elevated radiation, but they were small and would not pose an off-site hazard, he said. Someone would have to stand right on top of it for a period of time to receive a measurable dose of radiation.

The largest site, in the parking area inside the gate off Pletcher Road, measured 20-by-20 meters. It also showed the highest level of contamination, he said.