

Lake Ontario Ordnance Works Restoration Advisory Board Meeting – 1/12/00
Questions and Answers

COMMENT	RESPONSE
<p>1. Comment by Kent Johnson (NYSDEC) - The draft work plan for the remedial investigation is out but it hasn't been reviewed, it's been on hold. Once the EE/CA is final that doesn't mean that the Corps will go out right away, you can expect one or two years before the design is done, and that's a big if, if we get the funds.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>2. Question by Gary Smith (Modern Corporation) -- We were concerned about the condition of the Waste Water Treatment Plant when we toured the site. Did you say that was demolished?</p>	<p>Answer by Bill Kowalewski - The Corps demolished one wastewater treatment plant building – the final treatment cells where the TNT lines connected. There are two or three other buildings in the area that have evidence that kids have been in them. I believe that the Town of Lewiston is in the process of demolishing them. One building is demolished, another has had the exterior torn down but the concrete structure remains. I will defer to the town to answer, but demolition of these other buildings was not in the Corps' scope of work for this project.</p> <p>Answer by Darwin James Langlois (Town of Lewiston) - The Town of Lewiston Environmental Commission has pointed out to the town the problem with the kids. The Town of Lewiston owns the buildings and we have asked for them to be torn down. One has been knocked down, it hasn't been cleaned up, but the hazard has been removed. There is a problem with further action because the government came in and stopped the process, I think it was because of asbestos.</p>
<p>3. Question by Walter Polka (Community) - Was the carbon tetrachloride the most dangerous substance that you found?</p>	<p>Answer by Bill Kowalewski - The most dangerous material was a water oil mixture with PCBs and volatile organics, including carbon tetrachloride and chloroform, I believe it was about 40 drums, but I will have to check on that.</p> <p><i>Note : There were six drums of carbon tetrachloride wastewater and 50 tons of carbon tetrachloride sludge.</i></p>

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4. Question by Gary Smith (Modern Corporation) – How high were the PCB concentrations?	Answer by Bill Kowalewski - Over 50 ppm, it was classified as PCB contaminated waste because it exceeded the 50 ppm regulatory limit. The final reports on the lab analysis will be put out for review.
5. Question by Nona McQuay (Community) - Where were the PCBs found, were they closest to the Wastewater Treatment Plant? On the tour we were told that it was possible that it came from the Air Force Site. How were the wastes transported in sludge or what method?	Answer by Bill Kowalewski - All the waste went to a commercial disposal facility and shipped commercially. We typically found PCB's in pockets of liquid in the pipe. It was pretty sporadic. There was one area in particular where we got it. The carbon-tetrachloride and the chloroform came from the Chemical Waste Sewer line.
6. Question by Nona McQuay (Community) - In the 2,200 feet remaining, do you expect to find PCBs?	Answer by Bill Kowalewski - We will go in with no presumptions, we will assume that it is there. In the Chemical Waste Sewer line it is reasonable to expect to find it.
7. Question by Nona McQuay (Community) - Are the excavations that are done closed and remediated?	Answer by Bill Kowalewski - Yes, most of the work was done on the Chemical Waste Management property. Becky Zayatz and I both walked the site to ensure it was left in a safe condition. There were no excavations left open.

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NIAGARA FALLS STORAGE SITE	
8. Question by Walter Polka (Community) - What was the depth of the groundwater and split spoon sample?	Answer by Judy Leithner - For the groundwater the sample wells were in the upper and lower aquifer, the average depth was 25 feet for the soil samples, there were a few that were deeper.
9. Question by Thomas Freck (Community) - Does any body know what is going on with the radioactivity of the debris at the Rochester Burial site. There are talks of gaps in the data on the burn area site, I have also heard talk of it being non-existent. Is there anybody else out there doing samples?	<p>Answer by Sandra Staigerwald (EA Engineering) - With every soil sample that we take we do a radiation screening.</p> <p>Answer by Judy Leithner – The Corps looks for chemical and rad contamination at both sites.</p> <p><i>Note: The Corps will review information pertaining to the Rochester Burial Area and will provide information as it becomes available.</i></p>
10. Question by Thomas Freck (Community) - There was a restraining order on the site from the NYS Health Department. They didn't agree on the radioactivity level, is that still in effect?	<p>Answer: The Corps has not seen the restraining order.</p> <p><i>Note: The Corps will investigate this issue and will provide information as it becomes available.</i></p>
11. Question by Thomas Freck (Community) - Should the Niagara Falls Storage Site be remediated? I'm a little leery about the site even though the authorities are saying everything is ok.	Answer by Judy Leithner - We are also leery, and that is why we are measuring every part of the site

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<p>12 Question by Timothy Henderson (Community) – The area that Tom is referring to, the Rochester Burial Site, there are rumors that there are loads of contaminated carcasses buried there from radiological testing from the nearby university, but I don't remember any documentation.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p><i>Note: The Corps will review information pertaining to the Rochester Burial Area and will provide any information as it becomes available.</i></p>
<p>13. Comment by Timothy Henderson (Community) - I've also heard rumors about a train being buried there.</p>	<p>Response by Judy Leithner - We have done metal scans as part of our investigation. We have not picked up anything and do not believe that a train is buried at the site.</p>
<p>14. Question by Timothy Henderson (Community) - Is the Rad meter super sensitive?</p>	<p>Answer by Judy Leithner - The rad meter is sensitive, but it doesn't penetrate deeply, only about 6-inches. That is why we do borings and scan.</p> <p>The metal detector is sensitive, when I traced pipelines I could tell where they cut off.</p>
<p>HEALTH DEPARTMENT</p>	
<p>15. Question by Timothy Henderson (Community) - When will the findings of the cancer study be updated?</p>	<p>Answer by Paul Dicky (Niagara County Health Department) - Don't know, depends on how long it takes to meet initial goals, they are still setting up the GIS, hope it will be very current once the procedures are in place, it's still in the process of building.</p>
<p>16. Question by Timothy Henderson (Community) - If a person dies from cancer, is that given any more weight in the study than an initial diagnosis?</p>	<p>Answer by Paul Dicky (Niagara County Health Department) - No, only the diagnosis. Cancer is very prevalent, 1 in 3 will be diagnosed, in 3 out of 4 families someone will be diagnosed, 1 in 4 will die, those are the statistics. Hopefully this education process will help us.</p>

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17. Question by Nona McQuay (Community) - Will there be any additional pamphlets, because the one that I have only goes from 1992 to 1996. Are there any plans to do a historical analysis earlier than 1992?	Answer by Paul Dicky (Niagara County Health Department) - I don't believe so, I don't think they would want to do that. Older data is less significant, as it gets older it becomes less and less useful.
18. Question by Nona McQuay (Community) - I'm also noticing in these studies that one doesn't include women, one study is all about women, but Niagara County has the highest rate in every single case. Is the zip code initiative meant to identify cancer clusters?	Answer by Paul Dicky (Niagara County Health Department) - The cancer cluster studies in Niagara County in the past have focused on census tracks, it was more focused. I don't believe this initiative will eliminate the cancer cluster surveys.
19. Question by Nona McQuay (Community) - When do we expect to see more detailed data?	Answer by Paul Dicky (Niagara County Health Department) - The end of the summer is their goal, so very soon.
20. Comment by Kent Johnson (NYSDEC) - The Health Department has a lot of good tables on their website.	Response by Paul Dicky (Niagara County Health Department) - The web site is on the back of this booklet, it is www.health.state.ny.us
21. Question by Nona McQuay (Community) - There is a lot of information on the website, where should we go to find this information?	<p>Answer by Kent Johnson (NYSDEC) – Click on the Info for Researchers button.</p> <p>Answer by Becky Zayatz (Chemical Waste Management): I just typed in cancer rates in Niagara County, there is a lot of information on the differences in cancer rates and mortality.</p>

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OPERATING RULES	
<p>22. Comment by Charles Lamb (Town of Porter) - Page 7 of the minutes talks about the revision of the Operating Rules. It says that several Restoration Advisory Board members felt that it was necessary to allow consensus votes on technical issues. If there was an issue with a technical matter, in addition to comments, if the board wanted to take a vote, we agreed at our last meeting that we could do so. Why is this not reflected in the Operating Rules?</p>	<p>Response by Charles Lamb (Town of Porter) - I don't think that part about the board voting only on administrative matters should be in the operating rules. I don't think we are ready to adopt the operating rules.</p> <p>Response by Michelle Barezak (Corps of Engineers Counsel) - The Department of the Army provides funding for the Restoration Advisory Boards under the Defense Environmental Restoration Program for Formerly Used Defense Sites to provide a means for receiving input from members of the community as individuals.</p> <p>As it is stated in the Operating Rules, this Board is not an advisory committee and it has not been established to provide a committee recommendation. The Board can vote as a group on technical matters, but the ability to provide a consensus opinion cannot be supported in the Operating Rules as it is not a function of the Board.</p>
<p>23. Question by Nona McQuay (Community) - Dispute resolution, letter F on page 5, where it talks about an independent facilitator being brought in to resolve disputes, who did the writer think the independent facilitator would be? Who would appoint such a facilitator? Would the RAB have a voice as well as the Corps? Would it be a joint decision?</p>	<p>Answer by Ray Pilon - If there was a dispute, first we would try to resolve it with the co-chairs, then we would use a facilitator if necessary. The Corps would probably hire an independent facilitator, but the facilitator doesn't make any decisions, they just facilitate resolution of any dispute.</p> <p>The bottom line is, the District Commander will make the final decision</p>

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24. Comment by Nona McQuay (Community) - I don't recall the discussion about the termination of the RAB if the community members fail to establish a quorum for three consecutive scheduled meetings. I believe a quorum is a majority if I'm not mistaken.	Response by Timothy Henderson (Community) - We have three consecutive meetings in a year. I don't see why we wouldn't have a quorum in a year.
25. Comment by Nona McQuay (Community) - I just wanted to verify that current membership is 23 members.	Comment noted.
26. Comment by Darwin James Langlios (Town of Lewiston) - I would think that if we didn't have a quorum after three meetings, we might as well not be here, that is very clear in the minutes.	Comment noted.
PUBLIC	
27. Question by Jennifer Rhue - I have a question about the slide that we saw when the pipes cracked open and the water was put into a vat. What's the possibility of seepage into the groundwater and further contamination?	Answer by Bill Kowalewski - The area in which the work is being done, has natural soil conditions of about 30 to 40 feet of solid clay. From a "soils" point of view this is nearly the best possible condition. Water doesn't easily migrate through clay. When it rained on the site, the water stayed in the open excavations for weeks, so it appears that there was no migration to the groundwater.
28. Question by Jennifer Rhue - So there is no possibility in any of the areas?	Answer by Bill Kowalewski - No, I can't tell you that, but there is no evidence of groundwater migration at this site.

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29. Question by Jennifer Rhue - Will you be doing further studies in the future?	Answer by Bill Kowalewski - Yes. This is an ongoing study. We are planning Phase II of the remedial investigation.
30. Question by Jennifer Rhue - When you removed the water and the materials where were they stored?	Answer by Bill Kowalewski - For the remediation of the waste from the TNT and Chemical Waste lines, the contractor rented several large storage tanks. Towards the end of the job, the tanks were sampled and the water in them was sent off for disposal.
31. Question by Jennifer Rhue - Where did the tanks end up?	Answer by Bill Kowalewski - They were held temporarily, pumped into tanker trucks, and the waste water went to CECOS. The tanks are then decontaminated and returned to the owner.
32. Question by Jennifer Rhue - Do you have further research on the Plutonium from the Manhattan Project?	Answer by Judy Leithner - We have some documents that allude to it, we are still looking into it. The problem is when the material was brought on site during World War II it was classified, records are very hard to find. We haven't been able to find much yet. We don't know whether it was buried or not. We do sample to determine the nature of the contamination. We have done surficial scans and haven't found anything. The study is still ongoing.
33. Question by Jennifer Rhue - Is the Plutonium still buried or is it in the silo?	Answer by Judy Leithner - You are thinking of a different substance that was also from the Manhattan Project. The residue from when they took Uranium out of ore. There was no Plutonium, there was Uranium, Thorium, and Radium and that is now in the South corner of the site. It has been capped.

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34. Question by Kevin Burns - Will these records start appearing now that they are declassified?	Answer by Judy Leithner - I don't know. We sent people to the National Archives on previous projects, we've gone through boxes, but we couldn't find the declassified records. There has to be a Records Manager appointed to re-file the documents, and I don't know how they are going to manage it.
35. Question by Gary Smith (Modern Corporation) - I've never heard of Plutonium on site, can you explain?	<p>Answer by Timothy Henderson (Community) - Plutonium was something that was alluded to in a Bechtel report and evaluation in 1980 for the U.S. Department of Energy, there was mention that Plutonium, Uranium, Cesium, and some other materials were found. The document, which was a survey, also located the Plutonium burial site, but we were told that it was just a sign</p> <p>Response Judy Leithner - I am surprised at the Cesium. We know where the material came from, the sources would not indicate Plutonium or Cesium, that is a piece of history that we are still trying to find out.</p>
36. Comment by Thomas Freck (Community) - No one is sure where the Plutonium and Cesium went.	Response by Judy Leithner - We're finding that problem with records all along. We have lists of where the materials were put in the cell, but we're thinking that not everything was put on the list. I don't want to make it sound simpler than it is, but we absolutely do not want to dig into the mound to find out. We will be doing some non-intrusive studies.

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<p>37. Comment by Timothy Henderson (Community) - The materials in the mound are raw. Plutonium is a processed fuel, it could still be out in the environment</p>	<p>Response by Judy Leithner - We haven't picked up anything in our sampling yet, those things aren't on the list of storage cell contents. That is why it is taking so long to do the site surveys. There was a nice start by the DOE, but it wasn't a thorough start. We don't really know what is on site, and we are doing a careful study to find out.</p>
<p>38. Question by Gary Smith (Modern Corporation) - What types of materials are on site that aren't on the list?</p>	<p>Answer by Judy Leithner – Strontium, cesium, plutonium, supposed animal carcasses... there are rumors that they are in the mound.</p> <p>This is a very complex job, we want to make sure that we have everything. This is a long study with many different people on the team. There are Corps members across the entire country that are working on the project.</p>
<p>39. Question by Robert MacVie - Did you say that you tore down the Lewiston Plant?</p>	<p>Answer by Bill Kowalewski - The Corps demolished one of three or four structures on the site.</p>
<p>40. Question by Robert MacVie - I have a land deed that says that the Town of Lewiston was in charge of maintenance of the facility until 2005, why did you tear it down?</p>	<p>Answer by Bill Kowalewski - I don't know what you are referring to. I would have to see the deed, I would like to talk to you after the meeting.</p> <p><i>Note: Mr. MacVie was referred to the Town of Lewiston Supervisor, Sandra Maslen at (716) 754-8213 for a response to this question.</i></p>

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<p>41. Comment by Nona McQuay (Community) - For the lady who was concerned about groundwater contamination when they were opening the lines; the areas beneath the lines were lined with polyethylene. The Waste Water Treatment Plant that we toured was a derelict plant, no longer in operation, and it was a considerable hazard. There was no way to preserve the structure, and no reason to preserve it. We viewed those areas on behalf of the citizens, so that we could be assured that every precaution was taken.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>42. Question by Thomas Freck (Community) - You said that Radian was no longer the contractor?</p>	<p>Answer by Ray Pilon - Radian has demobilized from the site and will not return. We plan to prepare a scope of work to finish the project. The future contractor hasn't been determined yet.</p>
<p>43. Question by Thomas Freck (Community) - Will any local companies be able to bid?</p>	<p>Answer by Ray Pilon - I can't tell you that. Mary Price is our Contracting Officer. We have an acquisition strategy process that requires a review board, and a decision is then made. The process hasn't been started yet.</p>
<p>44 Question by Kent Johnson (NYSDEC) - Why are you able to undertake asbestos abatement at the Niagara Falls Storage Site, but not LOOW?</p>	<p>Answer by Judy Leithner - Since the Niagara Falls Storage Site property is owned by the Federal Government, we can remediate asbestos, chemical, and radioactive waste.</p> <p><i>Note: Most of the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works is privately owned and being investigated under the DERP-FUDS program. Asbestos is traditionally exempt under DERP-FUDS, although there was an exception made at the Somerset property.</i></p>

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Action Items	
45. Comment by Nona McQuay (Community) - The health studies that Mr. Dicky mentioned, I would like to have someone describe the health studies, how they are done, and give more detailed information on the zip codes.	Response by Paul Dicky (Niagara County Health Department) - It might be more useful if we had the zip code maps in front of us before we had someone from Albany come and present.
46. Question by Nona McQuay (Community) - Do you have someone specific in mind?	Answer by Paul Dicky (Niagara County Health Department) - I'm not 100% certain.
47. Comment by Nona McQuay (Community) - Then I think we would prefer to wait until you have zip code information.	<p>Response by Paul Dicky (Niagara County Health Department) - I was told that would be the end of the summer, so that could be a possibility for the 3rd or 4th quarter meeting.</p> <p>Response by Arleen Kreusch (Corps of Engineers, CT) - When it is time we can put it on the agenda.</p>
48. Comment by Becky Zayatz (Chemical Waste Management) - I would like another update from the Corps on their plans for 2000.	Comment noted.
49. Comment by Gary Smith (Modern Corporation) - We would also like to hear about budget concerns and funding.	Comment noted.

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AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING	
<p>50. Comment by Becky Zayat (Chemical Waste Management) - There is so much historical information about the work that the Department of Energy did between 1960 and 1986. There are a few key documents. Maybe someone could extract the maps and what has been accomplished, what questions remain, and give us a concise overview.</p>	<p>Response by Judy Leithner – We would need to talk internally and find out who we have available, but in general we are not staffed for this task at this time. We have gone through 19 boxes, and that has consumed a lot of time. That will take us off time spent on characterizing the site, which is a higher priority right now.</p>
<p>51. Comment by Nona McQuay (Community) – I reviewed the documents at the Lewiston Public Library and they were very interesting. It took an hour or two to go through them. The Corps did an excellent job of telling where the information came from. The clerk at the Town of Lewiston was unable to provide this information. The maps are very interesting. I suggest that people look at the documents in the library.</p>	<p>Response by Becky Zayat (Chemical Waste Management) - They may be looking at where the material was, not where it is now. It can be confusing.</p> <p>Response by Kent Johnson (NYSDEC) - The Work Plan for the Remedial Investigation has a nice discussion of the different wastes and tracking in the front.</p> <p>Response by Judy Leithner - The work plan is not finalized. We are not allowed to release a draft document, we may have revisions and people would end up with different versions of the document. The history wouldn't change, so I don't have a problem releasing that portion. It doesn't summarize things like the hints of plutonium or something else on site.</p> <p><i>Note: As mentioned at the 9/15/99 Restoration Advisory Board Meeting, the History Search Report for the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works Site is available on the Corps' web site at:</i> http://www.lrb.usace.army.mil/loow/history/index.htm</p>

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<p>52. Comment by Walter Polka (Community) - You are concerned with the technical side, but you are forgetting about the social aspect. Has your department talked to people who might have knowledge. I don't think that it's available in the library. It doesn't have the people side of the story. It was constructed in the 1980s, have they asked people who worked there? You are overlooking some things, you could solve some things if you just asked people.</p>	<p>Response by Judy Leithner - There have been limited interviews. We will put it down on the list and consider it. We will see what additional people are available for discussions of their previous work on site.</p>
<p>Additional questions requiring answers</p>	
<p>53. Question by Thomas Freck (Community) -- Do we know the location of high-level radioactive wastes in the Niagara Falls Storage Site. Would it be possible to remove them and place in a very long-term storage proper for high-level radioactive wastes?</p>	<p>Answer by Judy Leithner - We know the location of the contents of the storage facility. We are investigating other disposal areas which may be able to accept this material as part of the ongoing RI/FS.</p>
<p>54. Question by Thomas Freck (Community) -- On the trash pit and burn area, is this the "castle garden dump" or the Rochester Burial Area?</p>	<p>Answer by Bill Kowalewski -- No. The EE/CA addresses a drum-trench and a trash pit located on Chemical Waste Management Inc. property. I am not familiar with the terms "castle garden dump" or "Rochester Burial Area." There was a "Castle Garden Road" on the former LOOW site, however, I've not found any documented location of a dump-site on the road. The drum trench, trash pit, and former burn pit are at least 1/2 mile from the former Castle Garden Road.</p>

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<p>55. Question by Thomas Freck (Community) - Is Radian the contractor that is going to finish the pipeline contract, or is it open for bid?</p>	<p>Answer by Bill Kowalewski – Radian will not be completing the remediation work on the TNT and chemical waste sewer lines. The work will likely be issued as a task-order on a Preplaced Remedial Action Contract (PRAC).</p>
<p>56. Question by Timothy Henderson (Community) - The structure referred to as the Waste Water Treatment Plant was in effect, nothing more than a pump station, that pumped the waste to the Niagara River. In light of the characterization of the residues, TNT, PCBs, carbon tetrachloride, etc., are there any plans to check the outfall line leading to the River?</p>	<p>Answers by Bill Kowalewski –</p> <p>a) The water recovered from the wastewater treatment plant was recovered and analyzed for corrosivity, reactivity, metals, volatile organics (which includes carbon tetrachloride), semivolatile organics, organic pesticides, phenoxyacid herbicides, PCBs, petroleum hydrocarbons, and total explosives. No contaminants exceeded regulatory levels. The concentration of total explosives was reported at 4.2 parts per million. The regulatory level for total explosives is 40.0 parts per million.</p> <p>b) The outfall line leading from the wastewater treatment plant was investigated during the Phase-I Remedial Investigation. Subsurface soil samples were taken adjacent to and below the level of the outfall line. TNT was not detected in any of these samples. The samples were also analyzed for boron and lithium, which were considered marker compounds for Department of Defense activities at the site after deactivation of the TNT plant. These marker compounds were detected but at levels below screening criteria.</p> <p>c) The conclusion reached in the final report of the Phase-I Remedial Investigation was that this line need not be further investigated. USACE concurs with this conclusion and has no plans to investigate the outfall line any further.</p>