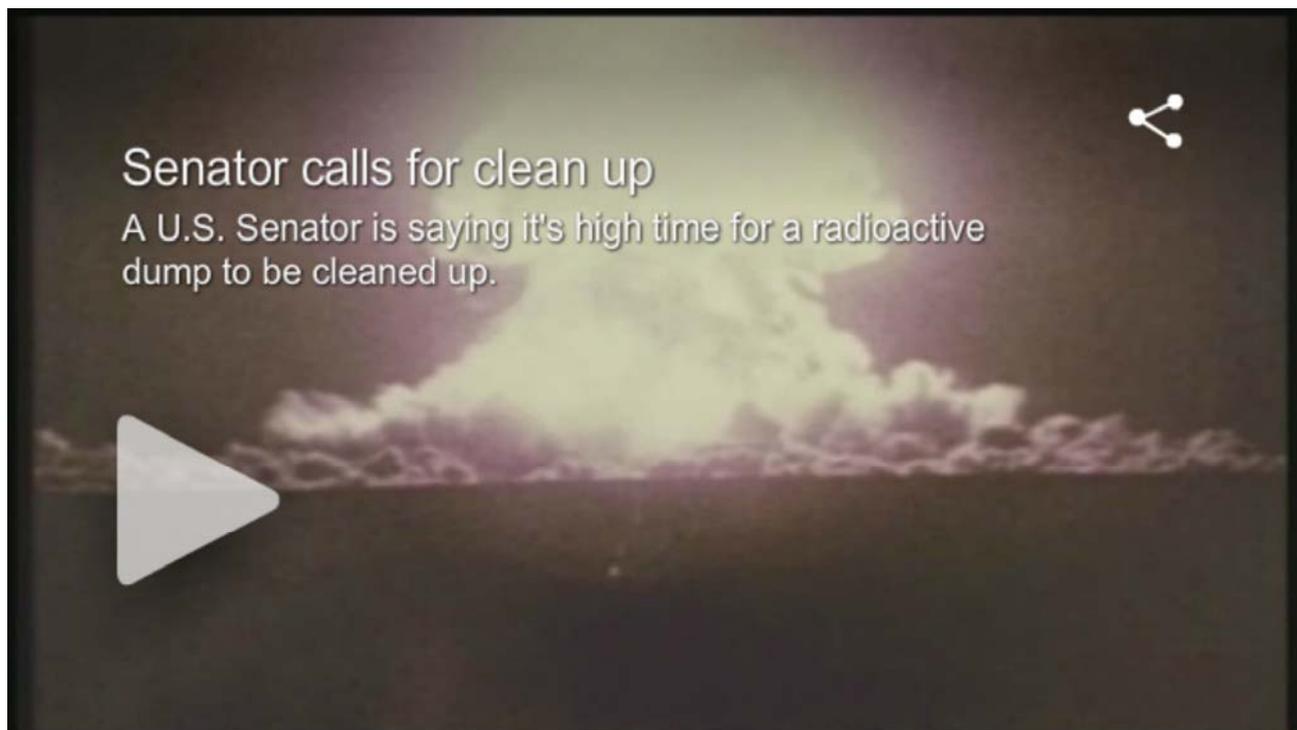




Senator calls for clean-up plan for radioactive landfill

By Jordan Williams, News 4 Anchor

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CITY OF TONAWANDA, N.Y. (WIVB) – Senator Charles Schumer is calling for action. He wants the U.S Army Corps of Engineers to come up with a plan to clean up radioactive waste buried behind families’ homes.

“The residents of Tonawanda don’t need a scientist to tell them [about the danger]... when the periodic table of elements is essentially living in your backyard, it’s not a very good thing,” Schumer said.

The senator says the Corps failed to meet its own 2014 deadline to release a report detailing the clean-up options. “They first thought there wasn’t a problem. Now there is a problem. They got to get to work ASAP,” the senator told neighbors.

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News 4 Investigates has told you about the toxic trouble for years. Leftovers from atomic bombs are in the old Town of Tonawanda landfill just north of the 290. The feds first found radioactive waste here in 1990.

STORY | Neighbors voice concern over landfill waste.

(<http://wivb.com/2014/10/23/neighbors-still-have-questions-about-buried-radioactive-waste/>)

Records obtained by news 4 investigates show the waste came from the Linde Air site, only miles away. The army disposed of 37 million gallons of waste in underground wells. Letters we reviewed show the company's wells clogged up, and workers started dumping the waste into a ditch which ran into Two Mile Creek. That contaminated sediment was buried in the landfill in the late 40s and early 50s.

In 2014 a spokesperson for the Army Corps of Engineers told News 4 the agency had already spent more than four million dollars on soil samples.

READ MORE | US Army Corps of Engineers Report

(<http://www.lrb.usace.army.mil/Missions/HTRW/FUSRAP/TonawandaLandfill.aspx>)

Phil Esposito has watched workers do the testing for years. "I've had red sticks with yellow flags on them showing where the hot sticks are right in my back yard," he recalled.

Esposito has lived here since 1970. He lost his wife to cancer three years ago and worries whether the landfill was a factor. "This [testing] has been going on for the past 15 years over here. Nobody seems to want to do anything about it. They just put it on the back burner."

Phil said he hopes the senator can light a fire and help expose the danger that's been hidden here for nearly half a century.

You can see a timeline for the landfill below.

Landfill Timeline

1930's - Present

1930's Town of Tonawanda landfill opens	1942 Manhattan Project work begins	1962 Neighborhood develops near landfill	1989 Landfill closes	1990 First radioacti detected
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Drag the slider below to scroll through our timeline

