

METROPOLITAN NEWS

Tonawanda N-waste to be stored in area

U.S. to clean up radioactive sites, utilize Ashland facility

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News Tonawanda Bureau

The U.S. Department of Energy's proposed plan to clean up several radioactive sites in the Town of Tonawanda would excavate most contaminated waste, except waste buried in the Seaway Landfill, and store it at a facility on one of the local sites.

The proposal addresses the four sites in the Town of Tonawanda where uranium processing or disposal during the Manhattan Project left behind low-level radioactive residue. It includes the former Linde plant on East Park Drive, two properties of the former Ashland Oil refinery and the Seaway Industrial Landfill on River Road.

The plan is sure to anger town officials, who want the contaminated waste taken out of town.

"Our local stance is that we'd still prefer it out of here," said Councilman Raymond E. Sinclair. "We've been opposing leaving it here since Day 1."

But storing the material at a local site will not pose a risk to the community, said Ronald E. Kirk, site manager for the Energy Department.

"It provides the protectiveness needed in a cost-effective manner," said Kirk, adding that moving the waste is not worth the millions more it would cost.

Under the \$58 million cleanup proposal recently published by the Energy Department:

- The 117,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil buried beneath 40 feet of garbage at the Seaway site on River Road would be left undisturbed.

- The 172,300 cubic yards of contaminated soil and sediment at the Ashland properties would be removed and stored at a facility — probably built on the Ashland site near the I-190, known as Ashland 1.

- The 61,650 cubic yards of contaminated soil, sediment and building debris at Linde would be removed and stored at the new storage facility. Four buildings would be partially or completely leveled.

- Contaminated material from Rattlesnake Creek, which runs off of the Seaway and Ashland sites into Two Mile Creek, also would be removed.

The proposed plan was chosen from six projects, ranging in price from \$3.6 million for doing no remediation to

more than \$100 million for completely excavating the contaminants and storing them off-site. There is no immediate threat to the public health or the environment, according to the Energy Department.

The proposal was to be released in September. But local officials in the Coalition Against Nuclear Materials in Tonawanda asked for a delay so they could challenge some waste-removal costs published in department documents.

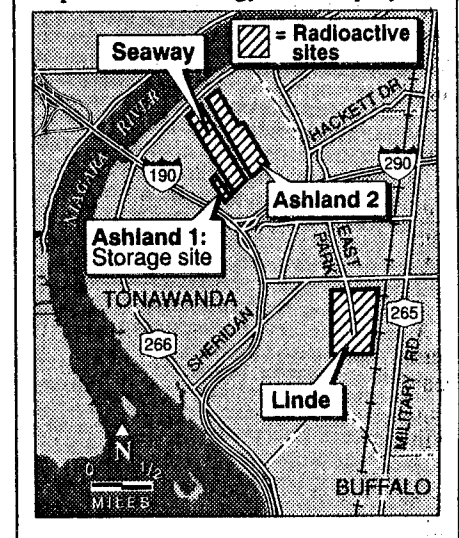
Sinclair said the group still is working on that issue and will meet next week to develop a response to the plan.

The cleanup also will affect the Town of Tonawanda's plans to revitalize the waterfront along River Road, which calls for light industry in some of the areas. Kirk said the Ashland-site disposal facility would not interfere with town development plans.

"From our perspective, it's not changing the land use," he said.

Ralph Krieger, union representative for Linde workers, had no immediate comment on the proposal. He continued to maintain that the contamination at the plant is more extensive than the government reports.

RADIOACTIVE CLEANUP Department of Energy releases proposal



Buffalo News

A public hearing on the plan will be held at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 1 in Kenmore East High School. The public also will be able to submit written comments until Jan. 11. The Energy Department must respond to the comments before making a final record of decision.