

# Cheaper cleanup eyed for nuke sites

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There might be a cheaper way to dispose of the nuclear waste left in the Town of Tonawanda by World War II's Manhattan project after all, according to Town Supervisor Carl Calabrese.

"We are starting to get to hard numbers now that are compiled by business people using good common sense," he said, citing the experiences of Wayne, N.J. as an example.

Wayne also has a problem with residual nuclear waste left behind by the federal government and now governed under the Department of Energy's Formerly Utilized Site Remedial Action Program.

The DOE allowed Envirocare, a contractor, to bid on the cleanup as a "turn-key" operation, pledging to handle everything from digging up the waste to packaging it, shipping it and storing it.

Bidding the project in such a fashion allowed the elimination of "all of the middle men and bureaucracy," Calabrese said.

Envirocare pledged to do the work at a cost of about \$400 per cubic yard.

Using estimates of waste believed to remain in Tonawanda, Calabrese said the cost for total removal, if Envirocare bid on the town sites as a turn-key operation at the same rate as it bid the New Jersey work, would be \$130 to \$140 million as opposed to \$200 to \$210 million estimated by the DOE for project costs.

The \$400 per cubic yard figure is all-inclusive and naturally higher than the \$200 for disposal alone as initially estimated.

The Wayne site has 64,000 cubic yards, as opposed to 350,000 cubic yards in the town. Calabrese speculated Envirocare might offer an even cheaper price in view of the larger volume.

The Wayne site involves Thorium, a radioactive element remaining in the wastes generated by the manufacture of mantels used in kerosene lamps.