

The Tonawanda Site

U.S. Department of Energy • Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program • August 1995

■ **Interim Cleanup Planned for Tonawanda This Fall**

As a result of discussions between Congressman John LaFalce and the Department of Energy's (DOE) Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management Thomas Grumbly, DOE will initiate cleanup at Praxair (the former Linde facility) this fall. The announcement was made in a letter on August 3 from Secretary Grumbly to Congressman LaFalce.

DOE will begin by decontaminating three buildings and demolishing a fourth building at Linde. The plans also call for removing a 12,000 cubic-yard storage pile of contaminated soil from Linde by the fall of 1996. All of the resulting waste materials will be disposed of at an

out-of-state licensed facility.

The cost of the work is estimated at \$14 million and will represent near-term progress in the remediation of the Tonawanda site while long-term, sitewide alternatives are explored further. Secretary Grumbly wrote Congressman LaFalce that, "the Department has many difficult decisions regarding the cleanup of our nuclear complex, and with decreasing budgets to address our numerous challenges, it is increasingly important to demonstrate progress and commitment to our stakeholders..." and it is his belief that "these interim actions speak to this commitment."

DOE's Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP), which will manage the Tonawanda site cleanup, currently has the funding in the FY 1996 Presidential budget request to execute these actions. Its ability to carry out this very important work depends on the final budget appropriated by Congress.

In his letter, Secretary Grumbly also accepted Congressman LaFalce's invitation to visit western New York and personally review the Tonawanda site properties. The visit is expected to be arranged at a mutually convenient date in September or October of this year.

■ **FUSRAP Budget Being Trimmed**

As part of the national effort by the Administration and Congress to reduce the deficit and streamline government, the Department of Energy recently announced a strategic realignment and downsizing initiative. Congress is also in the midst of the appropriations process for the FY 1996 budget year, which begins October 1995.

Attendees of the National Summit in May will recall that DOE projected an increasing budget for FUSRAP. At that time our budget planning figures were:

- FY 1995 - \$ 74.1 million
- FY 1996 - \$ 85.2 million
- FY 1997 - \$129.1 million

As a result of the actions described above, these budget projections are being reduced. The FY 1995 reduction is 3.2%. For FY 1996, based on the recent Congressional actions, our budget could drop by up to 10.4%. The final

Congressional action is expected to be concluded by the end of September. For FY 1997, the Administration is still formulating its budget proposal that will go to Congress in January 1996; but at this stage, the DOE request to the Office of Management and Budget will likely be significantly less than the earlier planning figures.

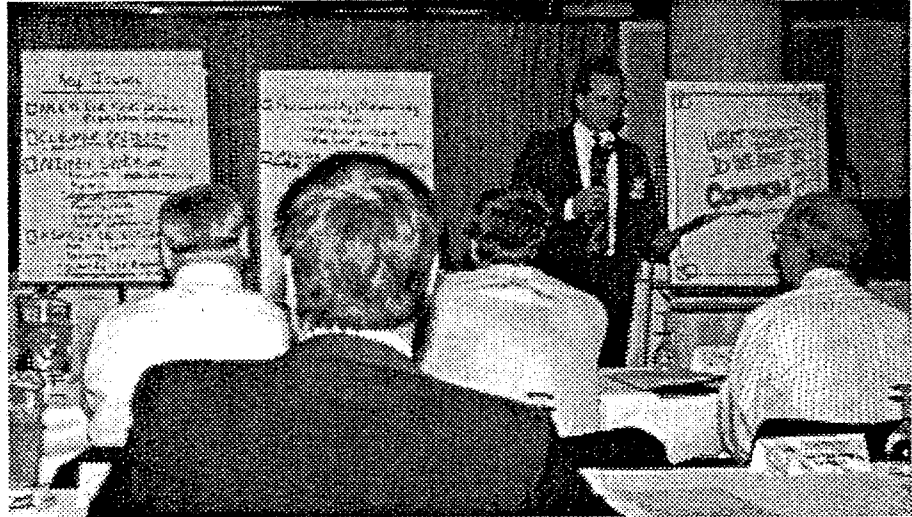
Despite these reductions, FUSRAP expects to have sufficient funds to maintain a vigorous cleanup program, focusing on final actions at a number of small sites and interim actions at the larger sites, including Tonawanda. The fiscal realities facing DOE put an even greater emphasis on our shared tasks of finding protective, cost-effective cleanup approaches at major sites that are acceptable to the affected communities. Your involvement is an essential ingredient in this process.

■ **Tonawanda Delegation Attends National FUSRAP Summit**

On May 2-3, more than 60 site stakeholders from around the country convened in Washington, D.C., for the first annual FUSRAP National Stakeholders Summit to define issues facing the program. Summit participants identified and prioritized values and issues and developed action plans. The five major issues were funding, cleanup criteria, risk, remedy selection and community acceptance.

The two day event was independently facilitated and consisted of breakout groups and plenary sessions with DOE Environmental Management officials.

Representing the Tonawanda community were: George Randels and Jennifer Martella from Congressman LaFalce's office; Carl Calabrese, Town of Tonawanda Supervisor; and Mike Raab, Deputy Commissioner for Erie County Department of Environment & Planning. Representing property owners were Jay Hill from Ashland Oil and Tom Dugan from Praxair.



Facilitator helps summit participants identify common issues.

Future steps in this ongoing process will be led by the newly formed FUSRAP subcommittee of the Environmental Management Advisory Board (EMAB), an independent advisory group to Assistant Secretary for EM Tom Grumbly.

■ **EMAB Meeting Set for Tonawanda**

The FUSRAP Committee of DOE's Environmental Management Advisory Board (EMAB) will be meeting on August 22-23 in Tonawanda. EMAB was established to serve as a board of advisors to assist DOE Assistant Secretary Grumbly on various program issues. The committee is intended to allow Mr. Grumbly to give the program appropriate attention as it pursues its nationwide mission. The goal of this committee, as defined at the National Stakeholders Forum, is to propose a set of general principles for guiding the implementation of DOE's FUSRAP efforts. The principles will promote consistent and cost effective remedies across FUSRAP projects.

Members of the EMAB FUSRAP committee and their affiliations include:

- John Applegate, University of Cincinnati, College of Law;
- Eva Crim, Dow ELANCO;
- Robert English, Consumer Power Company;

- Dr. Tom Gesell, Idaho State University, Department of Physics;
- Harlan Keaton, Environmental Radiation Control, State of Florida;
- Dr. James E. Martin, University of Michigan, Department of EIH-EHS;
- Dr. Frank Parker, Vanderbilt University;
- Robert H. Neill, Environmental Evaluation Group;
- Ron Ross, Western Governors Association;
- Sally Price, St. Louis Remediation Task Force;
- Joan Sowinski, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

For further information please contact:

*Jeff Weaver, U.S. Department of Energy EM-5,
1000 Independence Ave., S.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20585,
(202) 586-4400*

■ Soil Treatability Under Study

What laboratories have been studying Tonawanda soils?

- Bureau of Mines (BOM) in Albany, Oregon
- Environmental Protection Agency National Air and Radiation Environmental Laboratory (NAREL) in Montgomery, Alabama
- Rust Clemson Technical Center (CTC) in Clemson, South Carolina

What are the potential benefits of soil treatment?

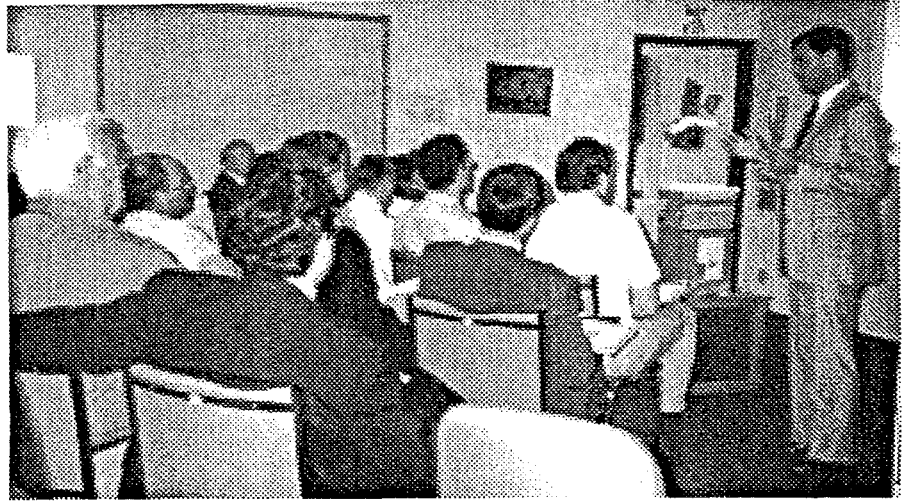
The treatment studies are focusing on reducing the volume of waste requiring transport and disposal. The costs of transport and disposal of waste are significant; therefore, if soils can be treated so that the radioactive material is concentrated into a smaller volume, then less material will require transport and disposal.

What are the laboratory results?

BOM studied the soil for its potential for soil washing to clean soils to DOE guidelines.

The study included particle size distribution and petrographic analysis, which is the use of a high powered microscope to determine how radioactive material is distributed in soil particles. Based on their study, BOM recommended that DOE discontinue their investigation of soil treatment for Tonawanda soils.

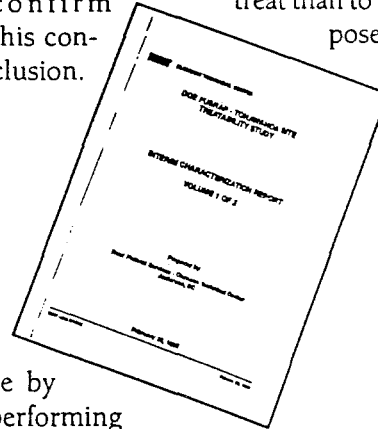
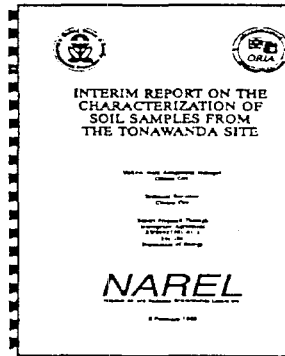
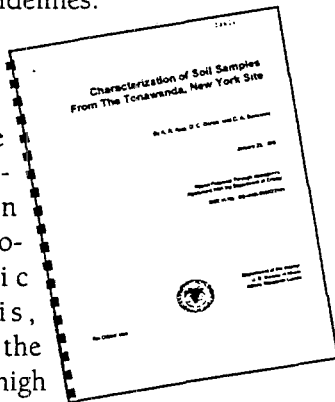
NAREL - also performed soil studies that included physical and chemical separation processes. Based on



Ron Kirk presents workshop on laboratory treatment results to CANIT and the community.

their investigation, NAREL believes that there may be some potential for treating soils but that further testing is needed to deny or confirm this conclusion.

treatment method would be scaled up to a pilot project effort in the field. If further tests fail to meet cleanup guidelines, or if it is determined that it would cost more to treat than to transport and dispose, then treatment studies would be halted.



CTC - performed studies similar to those done by NAREL. CTC has been performing more chemical extraction tests to see if they can achieve cleanup guidelines. CTC agrees with NAREL that chemical extractions show promise, but that additional testing is necessary.

Where do we go from here?

DOE has agreed to have the laboratories conduct further tests. Phase II of the treatment studies should be available this fall. If these additional laboratory studies are successful in achieving cleanup goals, then the

For Further Information...

Contact the DOE Public Information Center. The address is:

DOE Public Information Center
810 Sheridan Drive
Tonawanda, New York 14150
(716) 871-9660

You may also use the DOE toll-free, public access number 1-800-253-9759 to leave a short message on the recorder.

Direct from CANiT

The Coalition Against Nuclear materials in Tonawanda (CANiT), on behalf of the Tonawanda community, is in the process of submitting a request for technical assistance funding grant to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The purpose of the grant is to secure the services of an independent technical advisor needed to review and interpret documents and analytical data developed by DOE and its subcontractors. We are a bipartisan group of local elected officials who joined together seeking the complete removal of waste resulting from work done during World War II from Tonawanda to an out-of-state licensed facility.

If the grant is approved, we will then develop a request for proposal (RFP) with the assistance of local interested parties. Subsequent events include the selection of the consultant and the signing of a contract between the technical consultant and Bechtel National, Inc., the program manager contractor for DOE. Tasks and assignments related to the technical review will then commence under the direction and guidance of CANiT.

For further information contact :

CANiT Chairman Richard Tobe
Erie County Department of Environment and Planning
Erie County Office Building
95 Franklin Street
Buffalo, NY 14702-3973
(716) 858-6370

DOE Public Information Center
810 Sheridan Drive
Tonawanda, New York 14150



MR. THOMAS DUGAN
PRAXAIR
175 E. PARK DR, PO BOX 44
TONAWANDA NY
14151-0044



This Update is printed on recyclable paper.