

## News from Around the Complex

October 1 – October 15, 2009

Available on-line at [www.fffcleanup.org](http://www.fffcleanup.org)

October 15, 2009

### **HANFORD: Massive vit plant halfway done, *Tri-City Herald***

Richland Hanford's massive Waste Treatment Plant is 50 percent complete after eight years of work, according to the Department of Energy today. The vitrification plant is expected to begin operating in 2019 to turn much of Hanford's radioactive tank waste into a stable glass form for disposal or permanent storage. The \$12.3 billion plant has had problems leading to schedule delays and cost increases. But there were years when getting a plant started was in doubt. Plans for vitrification projects in 1989, 1993 and 1996 all were scrapped before construction began. "We've surpassed the midway point, and we will make it successfully to the end," said Shirley Olinger, manager of the Hanford Department of Energy Office of River Protection, in a statement. Problems have included a budget shortfall, rising steel prices and a slowdown in construction of key facilities to make sure their design was adequate to withstand a severe earthquake.

<http://www.tri-cityherald.com/breaking/story/754136.html>

October 14, 2009

### **Radioactive waste shipments to Utah site facing year delay, *The Salt Lake Tribune***

Drums of radioactive cleanup waste in South Carolina are ready for loading onto rail cars for the journey to a Tooele County disposal site. But now those plans could be delayed more than a year, after the state Radiation Control Board voted Tuesday to allow more depleted uranium (DU) only after EnergySolutions Inc. submits a report confirming its extra steps to safeguard the waste will work. The move was a victory for the Healthy Environment Alliance of Utah (HEAL) which has sought at least a temporary moratorium on DU, as the uranium-enrichment waste is called. Meanwhile, the Salt Lake City-based nuclear waste company is objecting to the delay now facing its disposal contract with the U.S. Energy Department. The company was poised to take around 15,000 barrels of DU from the Savannah River Project cleanup as early as this month.

[http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci\\_13555972](http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci_13555972)

October 14, 2009

### **Gordon pleased with DOE revision, *Murfreesboro Post (Tennessee)***

Congressman Bart Gordon said he was pleased the U.S. Department of Energy revised its decision to send radioactive waste from New York to Tennessee for disposal in municipal landfills. The decision comes after DOE held a conference call and was met with strong opposition to the plan from interested stakeholders, including Gordon, Tennessee environmentalists and government watchdog groups. \*\*\*DOE verified today that it would not move forward with original plans to dispose of low-level radioactive waste, from New York, in Tennessee. DOE has been deconstructing a closed plutonium extraction plant in Niskayuna, New York and planned to transport about 6,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil to a Tennessee municipal landfill starting in mid-October. On Thursday, October 8, DOE conducted a teleconference briefing as part of an initial public outreach campaign, and the feedback voiced by Tennessee stakeholders prompted the Department to revise its plans and dispose of the waste in a licensed low-level radioactive waste facility.

<http://www.murfreesboropost.com/gordon-pleased-with-doe-revision-cms-19824>

See Related NFAC Article Below (October 9, *Knoxville News-Sentinel*)

October 14, 2009

**Republicans point to cost of nuclear waste, *Las Vegas Review-Journal***

Cheaper is better when it comes to shouldering taxpayers with the burden of dealing with the nuclear power industry's mounting piles of highly radioactive waste. That's the view along party lines when Congress tackles the issue in pending legislation and in a request to the Government Accountability Office. The difference is how to go about making the task cheaper and whether disposing 77,000 tons of it in Yucca Mountain, 100 miles northwest of Las Vegas, is still an option despite the Obama administration's stance to the contrary. "The one thing they agree on is the taxpayers are getting ripped off," said David Cherry, a spokesman for Rep. Shelley Berkley, D-Nev. He was reacting Tuesday to an Oct. 1 request from Yucca Mountain backers Rep. Joe Barton of Texas and Rep. Greg Walden of Oregon, Republican leaders on the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

<http://www.lvrj.com/news/republicans-point-to-cost-of-nuclear-waste-64197857.html>

October 13, 2009

**Feds to complete cleanup of former Atomic Energy property in Middlesex, *New Jersey Newsroom***

Six decades after its use in the early days of the American atomic program, and 30 years after it served as a Marine Corps training center, federal agencies have announced plans to complete the cleanup of contamination at a Middlesex Borough site. Under the plan, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will sample groundwater at the one-time Atomic Energy Commission property on Mountain Avenue. Once the Corps removes contaminated groundwater, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will be responsible for long-term monitoring. The new phase follows several clean-ups over the decades at the 9.6-acre site, surrounding homes and the former borough landfill. Most recently, contaminated soil was excavated and removed during 2005-8. "That was the final clean-up of the contaminated soil, and now we're moving on to a final plan for the groundwater," said EPA spokeswoman Beth Totman. The site was established in 1943 as a receiving center for pitchblende, a uranium-rich ore mixture being imported from Africa for the Manhattan Engineer District, the formal name for the Corps' development of the atomic bomb.

<http://www.newjerseynewsroom.com/science-updates/feds-to-complete-cleanup-of-former-atomic-energy-property-in-middlesex>

October 11, 2009

**Disposal work at Piketon facility completed, *Chillicothe Gazette***

The U.S. Department of Energy has announced that disposal of 5.7 million pounds of excess plant oils has been completed by its Portsmouth/Paducah Project Office. The work was part of deactivation activities being done by USEC to prepare the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon for decontamination and decommissioning. According to DOE, the removal and disposal of the motor lubricating oils and transformer oils used during uranium enrichment activities at the plant in the past has been a major achievement \to remove a significant fire hazard, eliminate the potential for an environmental release and minimize hazards for workers during decontamination and decommissioning.\*\*\* The excess oils were incinerated at the Clean Harbors Commercial Incineration Facility in Deer Park, Texas.

<http://www.chillicothe Gazette.com/article/20091011/NEWS01/910110324>

October 9, 2009

**DOE wants to ship low-level radioactive waste to Anderson County landfill, *Knoxville News-Sentinel***

OAK RIDGE - The Department of Energy is proposing that tons of very low-level radioactive soil from a closed plutonium extraction plant in New York be trucked to Tennessee. The Chestnut Ridge Landfill in Anderson County was the only landfill mentioned as the likely dirt depository during a conference call Thursday organized by DOE. Some 6,000 cubic yards of soil that contains cesium-137 and detectable levels of strontium-90 and plutonium-239/240 are to be excavated from the New York site starting in mid-October, according to a DOE briefing. That's the equivalent of some 200 dump truck loads of waste. "It's less than 2 percent of what we take in on an annual basis," said Rob Owen, district manager for Waste Management, the company that operates the 200-acre Chestnut Ridge Landfill at the Knox-Anderson County line. Owen said he hasn't heard if a contract with a private firm to truck the waste has been signed, and DOE hasn't notified Waste Management of its intentions.

<http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2009/oct/09/doe-wants-ship-low-level-radioactive-waste-anderso/>

See Related NFAC Article Above (October 14, *Murfreesboro Post*)

October 9, 2009

**Utah won't take a stand on national foreign nuke waste ban, *Salt Lake Tribune***

Utah Gov. Gary Herbert objects to Utah being a disposal site for foreign radioactive waste, but he will not be throwing his support behind federal legislation to ban waste imports. The Healthy Environment Alliance of Utah (HEAL) asked the Republican governor to write a letter last week in support of the Radioactive Import Deterrence Act, dubbed "RID," a bill co-sponsored by U.S. Rep. Jim Matheson, D-Utah, to outlaw the importation of foreign waste nationally. Next Friday a House plans a hearing on the bill. "He is not taking a position on the RID Act," said Herbert spokeswoman, Angie Welling. "But his position on the storage of foreign waste has been made repeatedly: He's opposed to it." The flap over foreign waste began two years ago, after Salt Lake City-based EnergySolutions Inc. applied for a federal permit to import 20,000 tons of waste from Italy's nuclear reactor cleanups, process the waste at a company-owned plant in Tennessee and bury the remainder at a company-owned disposal site in Tooele County, about 80 miles west of Salt Lake City.

[http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci\\_13526004](http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci_13526004)

See Previous NFAC Article (September 4, 2009): [http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci\\_13270420](http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci_13270420)

October 7, 2009

**Work to remove uranium waste in Utah picking up, *Salt Lake Tribune***

The job of moving 16 million tons of radioactive waste from the shores of the Colorado River in southern Utah is picking up steam. The U.S. Department of Energy says more than 330,000 tons of uranium tailings have been hauled away from a huge pile near Moab and deposited in disposal pits 30 miles to the north. Crews began running two trainloads a day in August, doubling the amount of waste shipped to Crescent Junction each day.

[http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci\\_13506689](http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci_13506689)

See Previous NFAC Article (July 20, 2009):  
<http://www.deseretnews.com/article/1,5143,705318098,00.html>

October 7, 2009

**Test site will get name change, *Las Vegas Review-Journal***

Congress set out to modernize the mission of the Nevada Test Site and eventually change the name it's had for the past 57 years with Senate passage Tuesday of the defense authorization bill. The 93-7 vote

sent the measure to President Barack Obama with an amendment by Nevada's senators that charges the head of the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration with "renaming the site to reflect the expanded mission." \*\*\* The act provides \$89 million for defense-related projects in Nevada but doesn't specify what the new name should be for the place that was first called the Nevada Proving Grounds in 1951 and changed about a year later to the Nevada Test Site. Last month, managers of the test site, 65 miles northwest of Las Vegas, said they envision it becoming home to a new National Center for Nuclear Security where experts on treaty verification, counterterrorism and nonproliferation will huddle to chart the nation's course for achieving national goals.

<http://www.lvrj.com/news/test-site-will-get-name-change-63659772.html>.

October 1, 2009

**Hanford finishes shipping plutonium, unirradiated fuel, *Tri-City Herald***

Hanford has completed shipping its leftover weapons-grade plutonium and unirradiated nuclear fuel to South Carolina, a major step toward reducing security requirements at the nuclear reservation. About 2,300 containers of material were shipped, most of them coffee-can-sized canisters of plutonium that had been stored at the Plutonium Finishing Plant. Shipments of the canisters ended in April. Since then, the Department of Energy has been shipping about a dozen packages of unirradiated fuel, with those shipments completed in September. DOE had set a goal to have the shipping done before the start of fiscal 2010, which began today. "It is a major accomplishment with a lot of effort by many people here at Hanford, a lot of effort by transportation crews and by the people at the Savannah River Site," said Geoff Tyree, a DOE Hanford spokesman.

[http://www.tri-cityherald.com/kennewick\\_pasco\\_richland/story/737552.html](http://www.tri-cityherald.com/kennewick_pasco_richland/story/737552.html)