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[updated with links]

INVESTIGATIVE POST

Contamination concerns raised over upcoming demolition at West Valley Demonstration Project

Experts and activists contend plans to demolish the most radioactive building don't provide enough safeguards.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-PhX_cfQe0

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WEST VALLEY, N.Y. — Contractors are in the homestretch of clearing the **West Valley Demonstration Project** of buildings.



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Fifty-one of 55 structures have been [taken down](https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-21-115.pdf) [https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-21-115.pdf], and the [most contaminated](http://www.chbvw.com/Facility-Deactivation/MPPB-Demolition.pdf) [http://www.chbvw.com/Facility-Deactivation/MPPB-Demolition.pdf] of them all — the Main Plant Processing Building — is scheduled for demolition this fall.

How hot are its five stories of reinforced concrete? A trio of [activists said](https://buffalonews.com/opinion/another-voice-demolition-at-west-valley-nuclear-site-must-be-monitored/article_33ada9c6-406d-11eb-8103-cf6083e0c0b1.html) [https://buffalonews.com/opinion/another-voice-demolition-at-west-valley-nuclear-site-must-be-monitored/article_33ada9c6-406d-11eb-8103-cf6083e0c0b1.html] it “could be one of the most radioactive buildings in the country.”

The demolition might be welcome news, but [the manner](http://www.chbvw.com/Public_Meetings/Quarterly_Public_Meeting/022421/DD-Process.pdf) [http://www.chbvw.com/Public_Meetings/Quarterly_Public_Meeting/022421/DD-Process.pdf] in which contractors plan to bring the building down is causing concern, even alarm, in some quarters.

Plans call for an open-air demolition of the building. Some experts and local activists want it “tented.” That is, enclosed by a temporary cover to reduce the amount of radioactive dust and debris that can escape into the environment.

“You’re dealing with a significant quantity of dangerous material which is dangerous in microscopic quantities,” said [Robert Alvarez](https://ips-dc.org/ips-authors/robert-alvarez/) [https://ips-dc.org/ips-authors/robert-alvarez/], a senior advisor to the [Department of Energy](https://www.energy.gov/) [https://www.energy.gov/] in 1990s, told Investigative Post

[For more on this story, please visit the Investigative Post website.](https://www.investigativepost.org/2021/05/18/west-valley-contamination-concerns/) [https://www.investigativepost.org/2021/05/18/west-valley-contamination-concerns/]