

Ashford named involved agency

April 26, 2018

ASHFORD—The Town of Ashford has been approved as an involved agency under the State Environmental Quality Review Act for the Western New York Nuclear Service Center Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

New York State Energy Research and Development Agency West Valley Program Director Paul Bembia made the announcement at the April 18 Ashford Town Board. Being involved as an agency will allow the town to be kept informed of the preparations by NYSERDA during the SEIS process.

Bembia also announced NYSERDA and the Department of Energy are extending the scoping period for the SEIS until May 25. The goal of the scoping process is to get public comments on the proposed scope of the SEIS at the West Valley Nuclear Site. Those interested in providing comments on the scoping can visit seiswestvalleysite.com to see the various ways of commenting.

Councilman William Heim asked about the full cleanup alternative for the site and what it would take to make sure all the waste is safely removed. In order to ensure the waste is removed, Bembia said the site would have to follow standards for the cleanup to allow for unrestricted use of the property, set by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission,

Both Supervisor Charles Davis and Councilman Richard Bernstein expressed that one of their biggest concerns with the nuclear site is the low and high level waste and what would happen if a natural disaster happened. Bernstein acknowledged the high level waste is contained securely, but noted the low level waste could cause major problems if an event were to happen.

“We want that stuff out of here because ... if we had a catastrophic event, it could easily go into the creek and that is not what we want,” Davis said.

There are plans for high level waste to leave West Valley, Bembia said, it’s unclear when that will happen, given there is no high level disposal site in the country.

“That material does have a path to go to the high level repository once that high level repository is constructed,” Bembia said. “[The waste] cannot stay permanently at the site. It’s just that it may be stored there for quite some time because there is no repository today.”

After about a year of work, Ashford Planning Board President Andrea Mellon reported Cattaraugus County has approved the town’s master plan. Davis thanked Mellon, the planning board and everyone involved in getting the master plan done so they can continue moving the town forward.

“This normally takes three to five years,” Davis said. “I thank the planning board, the town board ... it’s a work of art what we put together.”

The next Ashford Town Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 9 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ashford Community Center, located at 9377 Route 240, in West Valley.

West Valley cleanup comment period extended by 30 days

Site unsuitable for nuclear waste storage, draft comments from task force state

- By RICK MILLER, Olean Times Herald, 04-26-2018, 58 min ago

ASHFORD HOLLOW — The West Valley Citizens Task Force met Wednesday to discuss draft comments on the next phase of cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project.

Task force members reviewed 17 pages of draft comments on the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for Phase 2 Decommissioning at West Valley.

The SEIS will consider alternatives including:

- Sitewide removal.
- Sitewide close-in-place.
- Hybrid alternatives which would not include complete removal of underground tanks that contain radioactivity and the state and federal low-level waste radioactive disposal sites.

The remarks had been previously reviewed by Task Force members in conference calls and emails over the past two weeks and had been intended to be submitted on Monday, the original deadline.

However, after receiving thousands of comments prior to Monday's deadline, the U.S. Department of Energy announced it had extended the deadline to May 25. The project website is www.SEISWestValleySite.com. Comments may be emailed to SEISWestValleySite@emcbc.doe.gov.

Twenty years ago, the Citizens Task Force was unanimous in its conclusion that "the site was in no way suitable for the long term, permanent storage or disposal of long-lived radionuclides." And draft comments from the current task force seem to agree with those findings.

The conclusion in draft task force comments states: "Unlike arid regions of the West which are geologically stable and better suited for storage and disposal of nuclear waste, the West Valley site receives excessive precipitation annually causing routine flooding and rapid erosion events, and is less stable from geologic and seismic forces."

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In addition, the task force noted population centers downstream of the site rely on nearby water resources for drinking water and other recreational activities enjoyed by local residents and tourists.

"The ensuing 20 years of additional study and monitoring, documentation of recurring severe storms and erosion events, plus a better understanding of the future effects of climate change on Western New York weather, only serve to reinforce that the West Valley Demonstration Project site is simply unsuitable for the permanent storage or disposal of any radioactive wastes," the draft comments concluded. "Based on this primary tenet, current Citizen Task Force members are likewise unanimous in their belief that the only Phase 2 decision which can ensure public health and safety for decades and centuries into the future is the eventual sitewide removal of all wastes."

West Valley was the site of the nation's only commercial spent nuclear fuel reprocessing plant and operated from 1966 to 1972 when it closed for upgrades. The plant never reopened and Nuclear Fuel Services walked away from the plant in 1974, leaving the future cleanup to taxpayers.

The cleanup has cost nearly \$3 billion so far, and could reach \$10 billion under the sitewide cleanup option.

Lee Gordon of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, which shares oversight at West Valley with the U.S. Department of Energy, said the Phase 2 studies are complete and published on the website www.WestValleyPhaseOneStudies.org. That includes a 500-page long-term erosion modeling study.

One Task Force member, Ray Vaughn of Hamburg said even severe U.S. budget cuts were unlikely to lead to solidified high level radioactive waste stored outside in casks left unsupervised. "It is a very slight possibility" that should be addressed in the SEIS, he added.

Task Force member Eric Wohlers of the Cattaraugus County Health Department said he "can't imagine people are going to walk away (from the site) and let them stay here."

Bryan Bower, the Department of Energy site director, said under the West Valley Demonstration Act of 1980, the act "is not completed until the high-level waste is transported."

With the government shutdown of the Yucca Mountain project, there is no national repository for high level radioactive waste being constructed.

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

Task force members considered asking for some kind of insurance that that casks would not remain at West Valley past their 50-year design life.

"Long-term interim storage (at West Valley) is a concern," said Vaughn.

(Contact reporter Rick Miller at rmiller@oleantimesherald.com. Follow him on Twitter, @RMillerOTH)

Another Voice: Sitewide removal is the only responsible choice at West Valley

By [Another Voice](#) | Published Sun, Apr 29, 2018

By Lynda Schneekloth

The West Valley Nuclear Waste Facility 30 miles south of Buffalo has housed radioactive and toxic waste for over 50 years on a site that should never have been allowed to hold any waste nor would be allowed today because of its erodible soils. Now the Department of Energy (DOE) and NYS Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA) will determine the final disposition of that waste through an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process. WNY has a huge stake in the outcome as it will determine whether or not our waters will be protected from nuclear waste contamination, now and for thousands of years.

The four alternatives are: “sitewide close-in-place,” “sitewide removal,” some “hybrid,” or “no action.” Citizens and elected officials in WNY argue for ‘sitewide removal’ to protect our waters and public health. An EIS decision is based on scientific analyses, assessment of risk, and cost/benefit. Since 1980, DOE/NYSERDA have done many studies, and more will have to be done especially in light of changing weather conditions and climate destabilization. But we have questions. How can one predict hundreds or thousands of years into the future? In light of climate change, how can we even predict what will happen to that site in 30 years? What if it is less costly to leave the nuclear material on site and the risk is predicted to be very low, is that OK? What if the prediction is wrong? Every exposure to radioactivity increases the risk of serious adverse health impacts: cancer, birth defects, neurological effects and other health damage.

And who bears the risk? We do, and we believe that the value of our lives and our home on the Great Lakes cannot be measured against cost. We want “full cleanup,” even as we acknowledge that no one knows what to do with nuclear waste, and there is no place where it can be safely stored for millennia. Yet we do not consent to being exposed to nuclear waste now; we do not have the right to impose exposure on future generations; we will not expose people elsewhere.

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So what to do? Alan Watts offers us a way: "Problems that remain persistently insoluble should always be suspected as questions asked in the wrong way." Instead of asking which alternative, we should be asking 'how will we safely dig up and categorize, design containers to shield surrounding life, store above ground, monitor, and eventually move it to a safer place?' For West Valley on unstable, erodible land connected to the Great Lakes, "Sitewide Removal" is really the only responsible action.

Nuclear waste is an insoluble problem at this time, so what are the right questions? What values should guide us? The problem, asked another way, might be: *How do we best protect life from nuclear waste until we find a solution?* This requires the sequestration and isolation of material over eons. And it demands that we find creative ways to pass on knowledge, information and locations of nuclear waste from generation to generation, adjusting to culture and the times. We can certainly stop making more waste, ending nuclear energy and weapons programs. And maybe we could learn from the harm we have done to life on earth by splitting the atom without a way to undo the damage. If interested in more information: <niagarasierraclub.com> and to make a comment until May 25, send to SEISWestValleySite@emcbc.doe.gov.

Lynda Schneekloth is a member of the Sierra Club Niagara Group.

SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL

05-04-2018

Scoping extended for West Valley Nuclear Site

WEST VALLEY—Public comments regarding the SEIS for the West Valley Site will be accepted until Friday, May 25.

The U.S. Department of Energy and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority announced the extended public scoping period for the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for Decommissioning and/or Long-Term Stewardship this week.

DOE and NYSERDA invite public comments on the scope of the SEIS for the West Valley Site. Comments must be submitted by May 25, to ensure consideration, late comments will be considered to the extent practicable.

For more information, or the ways to submit a comment, visit seiswestvalleysite.com.

Lessons Learned From West Valley Legacy Waste Cleanup Improve Efficiency



Left: The vessel known as the Dissolver, or 3C-1 is transferred to the Remote-Handled Waste Facility at the West Valley Demonstration Project for processing.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – [EM](#) and its cleanup contractor at the [West Valley Demonstration Project](#) (WVDP) say their commitment to applying lessons learned has helped keep them on track to reach a major milestone in legacy waste disposition later this year.

“Using lessons learned to safely disposition legacy waste is a great practice that benefits the project and the environment,” WVDP Director Bryan Bower said. “It can be applied to other areas of work to further improve safety, processes, and efficiencies.”

EM and CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley’s (CHBWV) waste management team have shipped for disposal just over 159,000 cubic feet of the more than 165,000 cubic feet of low-level legacy waste at the site. They need to complete about 20 more shipments to arrive at the milestone. That waste includes several large vessels used during past fuel reprocessing operations.

A prominent lesson learned resulted from the team’s work on a vessel called the Dissolver, or 3C-2. During an 18-month period at the Remote-Handled Waste Facility (RHWF), crews processed, packaged and shipped the majority of this waste for disposal offsite.

Original surveys of the 3C-2 showed its dose rates were above 200 millirem, which requires remote handling. Based on those dose rates, crews planned to cut the vessel into several panel-sized pieces and place them in 55-gallon drums for storage. After cutting each panel and moving them away from the 3C-2, surveys showed the dose rates dropped below the 200-millirem threshold. It was an anomaly compared to previous characterization assumptions.

Crews investigated the decrease in dose rates and learned that the annulus of the Dissolver contained leached fuel hauls from past reprocessing operations. Those leached fuel hauls created the high dose rates — not the Dissolver as a whole. The team applied this lesson learned to cleanup of the second Dissolver, 3C-1, and increased work efficiency. Processing of the second Dissolver is expected to be complete in five months, compared to 18 months for the first Dissolver.



Another lesson learned came with processing 3C-1. The team learned that non-destructive assay — a method for measuring radioactivity — confirmed that the box holding the 3C-1 can be size-reduced and packaged as low-level waste instead of transuranic waste. That means workers can cut the 3C-1 into two sections instead of multiple panels inside the work cell at the RHWF. Crews will package those sections in two large shipping containers for disposal offsite, and grout both portions for additional shielding and stabilization for transportation.

Earlier this year, workers finished processing a third vessel, the reboiler, a component of the liquid-waste treatment system. It's scheduled for shipment for offsite disposal in June. The team shipped a fourth vessel — the separator, another part of the liquid-waste treatment system — for offsite disposal in March.

The team noted that use of lessons learned helps maintain a learning organization where pertinent information is shared and used across multiple disciplines and departments, fostering continuous improvement among employees and the organization as a whole.

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere

Letter to the Editor:

West Valley nuclear waste must be stored at safer site

The cleanup of West Valley Nuclear Waste Site is not a complicated matter of what to do with the nuclear waste, it is a matter of when and where to store it.

West Valley is not an appropriate place to store nuclear waste. It is located on unstable glacial till adjacent to streams that drain into the Great Lakes where millions of people get their drinking water. There have already been glacial till slides from unstable soils at West Valley.

The complication of global warming and future severe storms could cause additional slides, resulting in nuclear waste leaks into the Great Lakes.

Some of these isotopes will be active for a million years and nobody really knows the long-term effect on exposure to humans. The only thing that makes sense for this site is to dig up and secure the waste at an appropriate nuclear storage facility.

Our country is currently experiencing an economic growth period, so money is available now for cleanup. Who knows if monies will be available in the future. If this site is not cleaned up now, the expertise on how to clean up and store this type of waste might also might not be available in the future.

I would ask the Department of Energy to collaborate with the Canadian government in sharing resources for cleanup around all the Great Lakes, including West Valley, as leakage into any of the Great Lakes affects Canada and the United States.

If we do not act now, future generations of children will be asking: “Why did they leave this mess for us? What were they thinking?”

Jay Wopperer

Williamsville

'Sitewide removal' only alternative for West Valley

- By LYNDA SCHNEEKLOTH, Special to the Olean Times Herald

May 10, 2018 - 3 hrs ago

The West Valley nuclear waste facility in Cattaraugus County has housed radioactive and toxic waste for more than 50 years on a site that should never have been allowed to hold any waste — nor would be allowed today because of its erodible soils.

Now the Department of Energy (DOE) and New York State Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA) will determine the final disposition of that waste through an environmental impact statement (EIS) process. Western new York has a huge stake in the outcome as it will determine whether our waters will be protected from nuclear waste contamination, now and for thousands of years.

The four alternatives are: "sitewide close-in-place," "sitewide removal," some "hybrid" or "no action." Citizens and elected officials in the region argue for "sitewide removal" to protect our waters and public health. An EIS decision is based on scientific analyses, assessment of risk and cost/benefit.

Since 1980, DOE/NYSERDA have done many studies, and more will have to be done, especially in light of changing weather conditions and climate destabilization. But we have questions. How can one predict hundreds or thousands of years into the future? In light of climate change, how can we even predict what will happen to that site in 30 years? What if it is less costly to leave the nuclear material on site and the risk is predicted to be very low, is that OK? What if the prediction is wrong? Every exposure to radioactivity increases the risk of serious adverse health impacts: cancer, birth defects, neurological effects and other health damage.

And who bears the risk? We do, and we believe that the value of our lives and our home on the Great Lakes cannot be measured against cost. We want "full cleanup," even as we acknowledge that no one knows what to do with nuclear waste, and there is no place where it can be safely stored for millennia. Yet we do not consent to being exposed to nuclear waste now; we do not have the right to impose exposure on future generations; we will not expose people elsewhere.

So what to do? Alan Watts offers us a way: "Problems that remain persistently insoluble should always be suspected as questions asked in the wrong way." Instead of asking which alternative, we should be asking, How will we safely dig up and categorize, design containers to shield surrounding life, store above ground, monitor, and eventually move it to a safer place? For West Valley on unstable, erodible land connected to the Great Lakes, sitewide removal is really the only responsible action.

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Nuclear waste is an insoluble problem at this time, so what are the right questions? What values should guide us? The problem, asked another way, might be: How do we best protect life from nuclear waste until we find a solution? This requires the sequestration and isolation of material over eons. And it demands that we find creative ways to pass on knowledge, information and locations of nuclear waste from generation to generation, adjusting to culture and the times. We can certainly stop making more waste, ending nuclear energy and weapons programs. And maybe we could learn from the harm we have done to life on earth by splitting the atom without a way to undo the damage. If interested in more information, go to niagarasierraclub.com. To make a comment until May 25, send to SEISWestValleySite@emcbc.doe.gov.

(Lynda Schneekloth is a member of the Sierra Club Niagara Group.)

NEXT WEEK: #SubEnvironment to Hold Legislative Hearing on H.R. 2278 and H.R. 2389

05.11.18

WASHINGTON, DC – The Subcommittee on Environment, chaired by Rep. John Shimkus (R-IL), announced today a [legislative hearing](#) for Friday, May 18, 2018 at 9 a.m. in room 2123 of the Rayburn House Office Building. The hearing is entitled, “Legislative Hearing on H.R. 2278, the Responsible Disposal Reauthorization Act of 2017, and H.R. 2389, to reauthorize [the West Valley demonstration project.](#)”

During the hearing, [#SubEnvironment](#) will examine two bills focused on the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) cleanup responsibilities.

The legislation to be discussed includes:

H.R. 2389, to reauthorize the West Valley demonstration project, authored by Rep. Tom Reed (R-NY), would reauthorize the West Valley Demonstration Project located in West Valley, New York for fiscal years 2017 through 2026. The bill also provides clarification for how the radioactive waste shall be disposed.

H.R. 2278, the Responsible Disposal Reauthorization Act, authored by Rep. Scott Tipton (R-CO), would amend section 112(a)(1)(B) of the Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978 to extend the authorization of a disposal site in Mesa County, Colorado, known as the Cheney disposal cell, from September 30, 2023 to September 30, 2048.

“Coming off of the House’s bipartisan passage of the Nuclear Waste Amendments Act, [#SubEnvironment](#) is continuing to examine proposals to address the Department of Energy’s environmental remediation activities. The Office of Environmental Management has successfully remediated many sites over the years, but more work remains to be done at some of the most challenging sites. I look forward to next week’s discussion of these critical issues,” **said Chairman Shimkus.**

The Majority Memorandum, witness testimony, and live webcast will be made available as they are posted on the committee’s website [HERE](#).

Another Voice: West Valley remains safe for nuclear waste

By [Another Voice](#) | Published May 17, 2018

By Gordon Connally

The Sierra Club deliberately refers to the material underlying West Valley as “soil” to make it sound vulnerable. Scientists reserve that term for the uppermost zone that supports life. Geologically the subsurface at West Valley is subglacial meltout till with very, very low porosity. Any spill would seep underground at an exceptionally low rate, facilitating quick recapture.

Back in the late 1950s it became obvious that New York was going to produce significant energy from nuclear power. Thus, it would accumulate a lot of used nuclear fuel. We needed to find a place to reprocess and store that spent fuel. So the New York State Geological Survey began a comprehensive survey of the entire state.

By the early 1960s NYSGS had eliminated all but three possible sites. One site was in the Adirondack Mountains, a second in the Finger Lakes and a third at West Valley in the Cattaraugus Creek drainage basin. NYSGS contracted three geologists to analyze the sites. Professor Paul MacClintock of Princeton University was asked to examine the Adirondack site, Professor E. H. Muller of Syracuse University was asked to examine the West Valley site, while I was chosen for the Finger Lakes site. We each produced a written report and gave an illustrated oral presentation describing major advantages and prominent risks. We became de facto advocates for the sites we studied. But none were involved with the final selection. After careful consideration West Valley was chosen as the most appropriate site in the entire state. That led to a final, more detailed, study of West Valley by Professor R. G. LaFleur of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

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West Valley was selected because of safety. The underlying glacial till is extremely “tight.” It was deposited by a glacier that may have been more than a mile thick. All porosity was squeezed out by the weight of the overlying ice. A basal layer of lodgement till was forced into and onto the bedrock as the south-flowing glacier moved up the south valley wall of Cattaraugus Creek. A critical factor is that this till rests directly on bedrock. There is no unstable material between the till and bedrock that could liquefy to produce catastrophic mudflows or avalanches.

I have absolutely no worries about West Valley. The “soil” has resisted erosion for at least 15,000 years. It withstood periglacial and boreal climates as the glacier receded. It has withstood at least 1,000 hundred-year floods, and perhaps a dozen thousand-year floods. There is no reason to anticipate that this will change in the future. In my opinion it was an excellent choice then and remains so today. The nuclear waste stored there poses less of a threat than it would in transit to some other site.

Gordon Connally, Ph.D., taught geology at several colleges, including UB, had his own geological consulting company, and was a research associate of the New York State Museum. In 2005, he was awarded the John Mason Clarke medal for distinguished service to the NYSGS.

West Valley Continues Progress in Vitrification Facility Demolition



Crews demolish a portion of the West Valley Demonstration Project Vitrification Facility.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – Workers recently removed a 38,000-pound crane from the Vitrification Facility at [EM's West Valley Demonstration Project](#) (WVDP) site, allowing for continued progress in the building's demolition.

“Using lessons learned and a deliberate approach are one of the best combinations for safety and success,” said Jeff Bradford, president of CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV), EM's WVDP cleanup contractor. “They continue to complete the demolition of the Vitrification Facility in a safe and compliant manner.”

One of only two vitrification facilities to operate in the U.S., the Vitrification Facility produced 278, 10-foot-tall canisters of vitrified high-level waste between 1996 through 2002. The facility's process crane was used to handle canisters throughout the Vitrification Cell.

WVDP Director Bryan Bower said the crane removal paves the way for the safe continuation of the [Vitrification Facility demolition](#).



“Once again the CHBWW team did an excellent job in utilizing their planning and execution of this high hazard work,” Bower said.

Before taking out the crane, crews sprayed a fixative on it for additional contamination controls. They used a large excavator with a hydraulic hammer to break away the crane rails on both sides to free the machine from its location. Switching to another large excavator with a grapple attachment, the crane and its hoists were lowered to the floor of the facility, where crews then performed additional contamination controls. Over the next few days, the crane was size-reduced for packaging and shipping based on size, dose rates, and weight.

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere

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EVERYBODY'S COLUMN

Geological failures took a toll at West Valley site

As a retired civil engineer, only recently taking time to learn in depth about the West Valley nuclear site, I am grateful to Dr. Gordon Connally for giving us valuable historical detail on how the site was chosen in the early 1960s (Another voice, May 18).

After reviewing the design in 1962, the Atomic Energy Commission found that the facility would not function reliably or efficiently. It was built anyway, and there have been many failures that produced a highly contaminated site. Geology is thus only one factor in the future performance of the site.

Over the past 50 years, two significant geological failures have occurred. Groundwater migrating through the "tight" glacial till from a strontium spill under the process plant has formed a radioactive plume that threatens nearby creeks. (Sand lenses deposited by the glaciers also allow rapid groundwater flow.)

The second failure was a landslide in an August 2009 rainstorm that brought the edge of the plateau 15 feet closer to the unlined burial trenches. Extreme storms, sharply increasing the frequency and intensity of "hundred-year storms," are a feature of climate change not foreseen in the early 1960s.

Observing the glacial pace at which taxpayers/decision-makers have been willing to fund cleanup of the site does not lead me to share Dr. Connally's optimism about "quick response" in the detection and mitigation of radioactive leaks over thousands of years.

WILLIAM H. TOWNSEND,
PH.D., P.E.

Snyder

Bill Classifying West Valley Waste as Defense Waste Taken up by House

On May 18, the Environment Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee held a hearing to discuss H.R. 2389, a bill that would reauthorize the West Valley Demonstration Project for FY2017-FY2026, and seek to classify all radioactive waste at West Valley as waste resulting from atomic energy defense activities, as defined in section 2 of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982.

During the hearing, Representative Tom Reed (R-NY) testified that, “The federal government should provide a disposal path for all waste on the site. Records show that the majority of waste at the site was a result of reprocessing federally-owned nuclear fuel—most of it from the federal government’s Hanford facility in Washington State [...] The result of that reprocessing that went to the federal government in some part for weapons research or weapons use.” He argued that all radioactive waste at the site is resulting from the atomic energy defense activities and should therefore be treated as defense waste. Doing so would provide a disposal path for waste at the site (at sites like the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant or the planned Yucca Mountain repository) that currently doesn’t exist for the waste under its current classification.

EM Associate Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regulatory and Policy Affairs Mark Gilbertson also testified during the hearing, expressing concern that categorizing the West Valley waste as defense waste, rather than its current classification as commercial waste, would force the Department to assume the environmental liability and cost associated with cleaning up and disposing of the waste.

Rep. Paul Tonko (D-NY) asked Gilbertson how the Department could view the waste at West Valley as commercial when the reprocessed material produced at the site were “all usable or characterized as defense-related.” Gilbertson replied that the waste is still considered commercial waste because the material was originally sold to a commercial entity for use, even though the commercial entity used the material for defense-related purposes.

Mr. Noah Shaw, the General Council of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) also testified at the hearing, noting that West Valley is the only site managed by EM with onsite waste that DOE calls commercial. West Valley also houses the only transuranic (TRU) waste in the nation that is prohibited for disposal at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in New Mexico, meaning that the limited dollars appropriated to the cleanup efforts at the site have to be spent to contend with the potentially permanent onsite storage of TRU waste, making the local communities surrounding the site de facto hosts for nuclear waste storage.

A committee vote for H.R. 2389 has not yet been scheduled. ECA will continue to track the bill and any companion bills in the Senate.

Concord closing e-waste shed

05-22-2018

CONCORD—The E-waste shed will not be opening in 2018, Concord Supervisor Clyde Drake announced at the May 10 Concord Town Board meeting.

The shed, in the Town Hall parking lot, was a place for residents to drop off their unwanted electronic devices. TVs, computers and other devices were accepted, with the end goal to reduce the number of items dumped on the sides of roads.

“Unfortunately, there were people coming from out of town using it,” Drake said. “It’s not exactly cheap to get rid of this stuff ... and we didn’t want to put that on the taxpayers.”

Drake said the e-waste shed became a hassle for the town, but noted there were other avenues for town residents to dispose of their unwanted electronics. MRC Disposal is hosting an e-waste collection on May 19, for \$0.60 per pound, and Senator Patrick Gallivan hosts multiple recycling events.

The board approved a resolution outlining its support for the cleanup of the West Valley Demonstration Project. Given the proximity of the site to the town, the resolution includes the long term goal of removing nuclear waste from the WVDP and safety transporting it out of the area.

“The Department of Energy was at a few Citizens Task Force meetings ... and presented different levels of cleanup,” Drake said. “We came out as a committee that we want it out of here.”

Drake said he worked with Ashford Supervisor Charlie Davis, and given the common border of the towns, felt Concord should show its support.

“I felt we should also go on record that we want it out of here,” Drake said. “We’d like it all gone.”

The Town of Ashford passed a similar resolution at its May 9 meeting.

A Public Hearing was set to discuss the rezoning and special use permit for Gernatt Asphalt Products. The company would like the town’s approval on a mining use on Middle Road. The property is a little over 40 acres, though only 17.7 acres would be mined. The mining would involve some below the water table, which will result in an 11-acre lake when the site is complete.

The special use permit was approved by the Concord Planning Board; the public hearing will be June 14 at 6:30 p.m.

In other news, the board:

- Appointed Julie Moriarty as a court clerk.
- Approved the use of the parking lot by Springville Center for the Arts for its annual Gala on June 9.

The Town of Concord board will next meet June 14 at 7 p.m., following the public hearing.

05-24-2018

Bembia honored for work in West Valley

ALBANY—For his time with New York State Energy Research and Development Authority and serving at the West Valley Nuclear Site for over 20 years, Director Paul Bembia was honored with an award for his accomplishments.

Bembia was awarded the 2018 Public Service Excellence award by the New York State Academy for Public Administration at a ceremony in Albany on May 21. Chosen from a statewide pool of nominees, the award recognizes outstanding public servants throughout New York government.

“It is a great honor for my public service to be recognized with such a prestigious award,” Bembia said.

Working with NYSERDA, the organization charged with stewardship of the cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration site, Bembia helped provide leadership and guidance throughout major transitions and cleanup efforts, managed interactions with state and federal regulators, coordinated with local and tribal governments and helped assure day-to-day public safety of the site’s employees.



“One of the great experiences in working with government is if you are lucky, you meet more good people like [Bembia],” NYSERDA General Council Noah Shaw said at the ceremony. “Committed to mission, selfless, expert, savvy and with the broad perspective on the trajectory of issues that have challenged generations before us and will likely face generations after us. Thank you ... for your service to the State of New York.”

Throughout his years working in West Valley, seeing the progress of the cleanup of the West Valley Nuclear Site and being able to help residents both locally and across the state is why Bembia loves his job as he continues to make even more progress.

“It’s been fascinating, its been great to see the progress that we have made on the cleanup, and I think some of the most rewarding work for me is ... to continue to work to make New York state the best place it can be for its residents and also its been a pleasure to meet so many great people in the community,” he said.

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Whether it's working with the nuclear site, helping the town board look at its options for a proposed solar farm or working with other groups and organizations within Ashford, Bembia has had a major impact on the community and many are appreciative of his contributions.

"When [Bembia] took over the leadership of the NYSERDA group in West Valley, [he became] involved with the school, the chamber, the town and that is a presence we didn't see before," Ashford Supervisor Charles Davis said. "I can't think of anybody, any state worker that would be more deserving of this award."

Looking to the future, completing the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the West Valley Site and being able to set a direction for phase two of the cleanup is what Bembia hopes to accomplish for the people in West Valley he has grown to love.

"I've been here almost 28 years and I'm here almost every single day and I truly enjoy working with folks in the community, meeting everyone in the community and I think it's an absolutely beautiful area," Bembia said. "I have a special place in my heart for the West Valley community."

Another phase completed at WVDP

05-24-2018

WEST VALLEY—Moving through the process of demolishing the vitrification facility at the West Valley Demonstration Project, workers removed a process crane earlier this month. Crews can now continue work associated with the project, now in phase two.

The process crane, weighing 38,000 pounds, was successfully removed from the vitrification facility by utilizing lessons learned from the safe removal of the cell's four coolers, extensive planning, engineering controls and historical best practices.

“Using lessons learned and a deliberate approach are one of the best combinations for safety and success,” CHBWW President Jeff Bradford said. “They continue to complete the demolition of the vitrification facility in a safe and compliant manner.”

WVDP Director Bryan Bower applauded the team for the “excellent” job in both planning and execution of the work.



“This paves the way for the safe continuation of the vitrification facility demolition,” he said.

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Crews sprayed a fixative to the crane for additional contamination controls, prior to the removal, then used a large excavator with a hydraulic hammer to break away the crane rails on both sides to free the crane from its location. Switching to another large excavator with a grapple attachment, the crane and its hoists were lowered to the floor of the vitrification facility, where crews then performed additional contamination controls. The crane was size reduced for packaging and shipping based on size, dose rates and weight.

The vitrification facility produced 278, 10-foot-tall canisters of vitrified high-level waste between 1996 through 2002. It was one of only two vitrification facilities to operate in the United States. The facility contains radiological and hazard contaminants as a result of HLW vitrification activities.

The facility's process crane was used to handle canisters throughout the vitrification cell. Full canister handling was a high-level waste activity. The process crane is a twin 4.5 ton hoist-trolley mounted on a bridge. The twin hoists were mounted 32 inches from each other on a turntable which allowed the hoists to rotate 359 degrees. This allowed the hoists to reach closer to the vitrification cell walls than would be possible with only a single hoist, and also made load orientation possible.

WVDP completes another phase in demolition activity

- May 26, 2018
-



Officials at the West Valley Demonstration have announced the successful completion of another phase in demolition of the Vitrification Facility.

WEST VALLEY — The process crane weighing 38,000 pounds was successfully removed from the Vitrification Facility by utilizing lessons learned from the safe removal of the cell's four coolers; and extensive planning, engineering controls and historical best practices.

"Using lessons learned and a deliberate approach are one of the best combinations for safety and success," CHBWV President Jeff Bradford said. "They continue to complete the demolition of the Vitrification Facility in a safe and compliant manner."

Workers at the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) removed the process crane as part of their Vitrification Facility demolition project. This particular work evolution is part of the Phase 2 demolition work associated with this project and allows crews to continue on with the demolition of this facility.

"Once again the CHBWV Team did an excellent job in utilizing their planning and execution of this high hazard work," WVDP Director Bryan Bower said. "This paves the way for the safe continuation of the Vitrification Facility demolition."

Prior to the start of the removal process, crews sprayed a fixative to the crane for additional contamination controls. Crews used a large excavator with a hydraulic hammer to break away the crane rails on both sides to free the crane from its location. Switching to another large excavator with a grapple attachment, the crane and its hoists were lowered to the floor of the Vitrification Facility, where crews then performed additional contamination controls. Over the next few days, the crane was size reduced for packaging and shipping based on size, dose rates and weight.

The Vitrification Facility produced 278, 10-foot-tall canisters of vitrified high-level waste between 1996 through 2002. It was one of only two vitrification facilities to operate in the United States. The facility contains radiological and hazard contaminants as a result of HLW vitrification activities.

The facility's process crane was used to handle canisters throughout the Vitrification Cell. Full canister handling was a high-level waste activity. The process crane is a twin 4.5 ton hoist/trolley mounted on a bridge. The twin hoists were mounted 32 inches from each other on a turntable which allowed the hoists to rotate 359 degrees. This allowed the hoists to reach closer to the Vitrification Cell walls than would be possible with only a single hoist, and also made load orientation possible.

West Valley Contractor Receives 80 Percent of Available Award Fee



Crews lower a cooler to the floor as part of Vitrification Facility demolition activities.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – [EM's](#) cleanup contractor at the [West Valley Demonstration Project](#) (WVDP) [earned \\$365,000 of a possible \\$455,965 award fee](#) for the Aug. 30, 2017-Feb. 28, 2018 performance period, according to a recently released scorecard.

EM noted that CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV) met the majority of performance goals and objectives for the period. The contractor received an “excellent” rating for safety, health, and quality management; “very good” for both business administration and project management; and “good” for environmental and regulatory strategy.

“CHBWV continues to have a very successful year,” EM WVDP Site Director Bryan Bower said. “During this last rating period, [CHBWV safely completed the removal, packaging, and shipment of four in-cell Vitrification Facility coolers](#). This particular work evolution was the highest remaining hazard associated with this project, and was a critical path for continuing on with the demolition of this facility.”

Bower noted that CHBWV continues to be ahead of schedule for safely completing a legacy waste milestone.

“Our workforce continues to deactivate the Main Plant Process Building’s most difficult areas in a safe, deliberate, and compliant manner,” Bower said. “This latest award fee reflects CHBWV’s ongoing efforts to complete contract milestones in a safe, effective, and responsive manner.”



Each year EM releases information relating to contractor fee payments — earned by completing the work called for in the contracts — to further transparency in its cleanup program.

According to EM's performance evaluation for CHBWV:

The safety, health, and quality management rating reflects CHBWV's lower rates of work-related injury and illness. The contractor's quality assurance personnel paid excellent attention to detail inspecting containers used to transport Vitrification Facility demolition debris. Employees also made progress in safeguards and security training, responsiveness, communication, and document production. An area that needs improvement is conduct of operations for maintenance of spill response materials.

In the project management area, CHBWC planned well for the initial demolition of the Vitrification Facility and shipments of demolition debris and legacy waste. The contractor's good planning and use of mockups benefit the Main Plant Process Building deactivation activities.

In the environmental and regulatory compliance section, CHBWV submitted well-organized, good-quality routine reports on time. The contractor provided all necessary backup data to make DOE's review efficient. However, the scorecard noted two regulatory compliance issues.

Once the site of the first and only commercial nuclear fuel reprocessing plant in the U.S., WVDP is now an environmental cleanup and waste management project located about 35 miles south of Buffalo. The cleanup is conducted by EM in cooperation with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority.

View CHBWV's scorecard [here](#).

-Contributor: David Sheeley

WVDP presents checks for support to WV fire district, BCH and Mercy Flight

- By Rich Place, Managing Editor -06-04-2018 - 2 hrs ago



THE SALAMANCA PRESS

PROUDLY SERVING CENTRAL AND WESTERN CATTARAUGUS COUNTY SINCE 1867



Bertrand Chaffee Hospital recently received a \$5,000 check from the West Valley Demonstration Project as one of the valuable resources for WVDP employees and the surrounding community. Those present for the check dedication were (front row, from left) Dan Sullivan, Federal Project Director DOE-West Valley Demonstration Project; Kathy Paszkiewicz, JBR Representative to BCH Foundation; Teresa Donohue, BCH CFO; Lee Gordon, New York State Energy Research & Development Authority Sr. Project Manager; Calvin Batterson; and David Batterson, BCH Foundation Board member; (back row, from left) Bryan Bower, Director DOE-West Valley Demonstration Project; Ken Whitham, Vice President CHBWV Environmental, Safety, Health and Quality; Scott Anderson, CHBWV Deputy General Manager; Jeff Bradford CHBWV President & General Manager; Joel Maul, BCH Foundation; Nils Gunnerson, BCH CEO; and Edwin Heidelberger MD, BCH VP of Medical Affairs.

Submitted photo



Mercy Flight recently received a \$5,000 check from the West Valley Demonstration Project as one of the valuable resources for WVDP employees and the surrounding community. Those present for the check presentation were: (front row, from left) Dan Sullivan, Federal Project Director DOE-West Valley Demonstration Project; Ken Whitham, Vice President CHBWV Environmental, Safety, Health and Quality; and Ashley Coder, Director of Development and Special Events; (back row, from left) Jeff Bradford CHBWV President & General Manager; Bryan Bower, Director DOE-West Valley Demonstration Project; Paul Bembia Director NYSERDA; and Scott Anderson, CHBWV Deputy General Manager.

Submitted photo

WEST VALLEY — The West Valley Fire District No. 1, along with Bertrand Chaffee Hospital in Springville and Mercy Flight, was recently presented a check for its services on behalf of the West Valley Demonstration Project.

The fire district, which oversees fire and emergency services at the project site on Rock Springs Road, was given a \$70,000 check by officials from the U.S. Department of Energy, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and CH2MHLL BWXT West Valley LLC (CHBWV).

Bertrand Chaffee Hospital and Mercy Flight were given checks of \$5,000 each, as the hospital and its staff provide medical support and Mercy Flight provides air ambulance service to the project.

The checks were awarded for the services each provides to the West Valley Demonstration Project.

“We are fortunate to have these services available within our community should the need arise,” said Jeff Bradford, CHBWV president and general manager. “It provides an extra level of security and safety to all our employees.”

Shawn Lafferty, chairman for West Valley Fire District No. 1, said the funds are presented annually by the West Valley Demonstration Project, which he said is one of the only nuclear cleanup facilities without a paid fire department.

“It’s definitely a win-win,” Lafferty said. “They train and practice safety and that is a huge savings for everyone involved. Because they focus a lot on safety, they have a pretty stellar record.

“We are there just in case,” he added.

The money awarded to the fire district is used for equipment, trucks and training for its members to provide essential services to the community, Lafferty said.

“For a volunteer organization we have fairly modern equipment and this is one of the reasons we can afford to do that,” he said.

“The fire and emergency services provided are essential for the safety of the personnel at the West Valley Demonstration Project,” said Paul Bembia, program director at NYSERDA. “We appreciate the time and dedication of these first responders and medical staff, who are ensuring that those working at the project and in the surrounding community receive outstanding care now and in the case of an emergency.”

The \$5,000 checks to Bertrand Chaffee Hospital, which is the nearest hospital from the West Valley Demonstration Project, and Mercy Flight are also for services the two organizations provide employees at the project.

“Mercy Flight provides air ambulance service to the project site,” said Bryan Bower, WVDP Director for the U.S. Department of Energy. “All three organizations take part in joint emergency planning and onsite drills to ensure readiness. The employees of WVDP appreciate their continued commitment.”

Officials from the DOE, NYSERDA and CHBWV on behalf of the West Valley Demonstration Project recently awarded the checks to officials with the West Valley Fire District No. 1, Bertrand Chaffee Hospital and Mercy Flight in separate ceremonial presentations.

June 5, 2018

THE
NATIONAL LAW REVIEW

June 2018 Washington Update

Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Congress

House Hearing on DOE Cleanup Efforts

[On May 18](#), the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment held a hearing on H.R. 2278, the Responsible Disposal Reauthorization Act of 2017, and H.R. 2389, to reauthorize the West Valley demonstration project and for other purposes. Subcommittee Chairman Rep. John Shimkus (R-IL) stated that the DOE's office of Environmental Management (EM) faces "a significant workload to complete decontamination work at legacy Cold War sites. Since its establishment about 30 years ago, EM has successfully remediated 92 sites, but the most technologically challenging projects remain in process at 17 locations." Rep. Tom Reed (R-NY), who sponsored H.R. 2389, explained why Congress needs to prioritize cleaning up nuclear sites, stating, "There are still nuclear sites in the United States that need to be managed and cleaned up. The Western New York Nuclear Service Center in my district is one such site. The Department of Energy estimates that making the investments needed now in nuclear site remediation will save our nation hundreds of millions of dollars in the coming decades."

West Valley Training Focuses on Rescuing Injured Workers in Confined Spaces



Eric Fuller of CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley takes his turn rescuing a 185-pound mannequin from the excavation pit during confined space training.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – [EM](#) and its cleanup contractor at the [West Valley Demonstration Project](#) recently conducted training to safely rescue an injured person from a confined space.

CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley's (CHBWV) Pat Douglass and Steve Wedvik, who also serves as a West Valley Volunteer Hose Company assistant fire chief, held the training for employees at an onsite excavation work zone.

"This type of training is great," CHBWV's Eric Fuller said. "Training that employs hands-on learning with real-life applications is better than being inside four walls."



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY

OFFICE OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT

EM Update | Vol. 10, Issue 22 | June 5, 2018



A multidisciplinary group of employees receive confined space training rescue at an onsite excavation work zone.

The trainees learned to use tools and equipment for rescue, including, a trench box, harnesses, ladders, ropes, and pulleys.

Each employee entered the trench to rescue a life-sized mannequin in various scenarios.

"It's not just enough to learn something new," Wedvik said. "It's even more important to take what you've learned and be able to apply that learning to different challenges."

Employees trained inside a 30-foot-long, 3-foot-deep trench with a 6-foot-deep pit on one end. Workers had excavated the space to isolate utilities to remove an old Low-Level Liquid Waste Treatment Facility pad.

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere

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WVDP presents checks for site support

June 13, 2018

WEST VALLEY—West Valley Fire District 1, Bertrand Chaffee Hospital and Mercy Flight were presented checks to pay for their support to the West Valley Demonstration Project by representatives from the U.S. Department of Energy, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority and CH2MHILL BWXT West Valley, LLC.

The organizations serve as valuable resources for WVDP employees and the surrounding community. Bertrand Chaffee Hospital and its staff provide medical support, Mercy Flight provides air ambulance service to the Project in the event of an emergency and the West Valley Fire District volunteers provide fire and emergency services.



West Valley Fire District 1 received \$70,000 for its work keeping personnel safe at the WVDP site, Program Director at NYSERDA Paul Bembia said.

“The fire and emergency services provided are essential for the safety of the personnel at the West Valley Demonstration Project,” said Bembia. “We appreciate the time and dedication of these first responders and medical staff, who are ensuring that those working at the Project and in the surrounding community receive outstanding care now and in the case of an emergency.”

Both BCH and Mercy Flight received \$5,000.

“We are fortunate to have these services available within our community should the need arise,” said CHBWV President and General Manager Jeff Bradford. “It provides an extra level of security and safety to all our employees.”

“Mercy Flight provides air ambulance service to the Project site,” stated WVDP Director for the U.S. Department of Energy Bryan Bower. “All three organizations take part in joint emergency planning and onsite drills to ensure readiness. The employees of WVDP appreciate their continued commitment.”

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WVDP participates in equipment sharing

June 21, 2018

WEST VALLEY—Cost savings continue from two EM cleanup sites sharing highly specialized equipment for packaging and relocating nuclear waste to storage locations. When completed, the sharing of equipment between sites will help achieve a total savings valued at approximately \$2.4 million.

“Repurposing highly specialized equipment like this helps save money for taxpayers and the government,” CH2M HILL Plateau Remediation Company’s Hanford Fuels Facilities Maintenance Manager Scott Garrison said. “It also saves cost and time on schedule because the equipment is already built, tested and used, even with minor retrofitting for our application.”

Workers at the West Valley Demonstration Project shipped a large tow tractor and vertical transporter to the Richland Operations Office at the Hanford Site in Washington on June 7 to assist in proposed packaging and moving of radioactive cesium and strontium capsules to dry storage. The equipment was previously used by CHBWV to move 56 casks containing canisters of vitrified high-level waste to an onsite interim storage pad. The two specialized pieces of equipment were designed and built to move each 87.5-ton, steel-reinforced vertical storage cask, each of which contained five high-level waste canisters, to the interim storage pad at the WVDP.

“Gaining insight from lessons learned is not a one-time activity,” Lettie Chilson, WVDP Facilities Manager said. “Our learning has not stopped. It continued throughout the equipment relocation process and doesn’t end just because the final loaded truck left the site. Hanford and WVDP will continue to share lessons learned to further assist Hanford in their success with their relocation workscope.”

The tow tractor, which was used at the WVDP to safely relocate storage casks to an onsite storage pad, weighs 50,000 pounds and is capable of generating approximately 35,000-48,000 pounds of tractive effort.

Accompanying the tow tractor was the 47-ton Vertical Cask Transporter which uses multiple hydraulic actuators designed for accurate and precise lifting and movement of heavy loads. In addition, it is designed to be very stable, which is important to safety when lifting and moving heavy loads.

Earlier this year, a robotically-operated welder that was used in WVDP’s high-level waste relocation project was shipped to Hanford as part of this equipment sharing partnership.

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Teams from both sites continue to share best practices, from both current and previous site visits. In addition, frequent communications between employees from RL's cleanup contractor CH2M Hill Plateau Remediation Co. and their counterparts at CH2M BWXT West Valley continue to discuss best practices and lessons learned from WVDP's successful relocation of 278 canisters of vitrified high-level waste to an onsite interim storage pad. CHBWV accomplished this task in November 2016, a year ahead of schedule.

At Hanford, a team is scheduled to relocate 1,936 cesium and strontium capsules stored underwater at the Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility to an outside storage area. The planned storage area at Hanford, similar to the one at WVDP, is modeled after dry spent fuel storage systems at commercial nuclear power plants in the U.S. It will feature above-ground, shielded cask storage, which requires little maintenance.

Town, school district to receive \$500,000 for West Valley site

• Jun 22, 2018 Updated Jun 22, 2018

ALBANY — Much-needed financial relief is on the way to the town of Ashford and the West Valley Central School District in the form of a \$500,000 supplemental payment in lieu of taxes secured by state Sen. Catharine Young in the state budget.

The allocation, which is in addition to the town's regular annual PILOT payment of \$500,000, is intended to ease the financial strain on the locality and taxpayers resulting from the long-term loss of tax revenue from the West Valley Demonstration Project site. The school district will receive \$280,000 of the allocation, with the remainder of \$220,000 going to the town of Ashford.

"Although state aid is intended to compensate, these payments are based on an assessment from 1980 and there hasn't been an increase in more than two decades," Young said. "This supplemental payment is critically needed to ease the pressure on taxpayers, the school district and the town, and to meet critical obligations."

"Senator Young has worked with the town on these financial issues for many years, and I cannot express how grateful I am for her constant support and commitment to helping us secure state aid and advance goals important to our future," said Town of Ashford Supervisor Charles Davis. "These funds couldn't arrive at a better time. With our town's master plan recently completed, we can now move forward with some of the recommended economic development projects without having to rely on taxpayers. I am optimistic about where we are headed."

"The West Valley Central School District and its Board of Education would like to thank Senator Young for successfully obtaining the \$280,000 supplemental PILOT payment. Senator Young has been working with the District for several years on the PILOT legislation. She has been a champion of our school district and the unique situation we are in as a host local government of the West Valley Demonstration Project. Senator Young's hard work and perseverance is greatly appreciated," said West Valley Central School District Superintendent, Eric Lawton.

West Valley was the site of the first and only commercial reprocessing plant in the United States. After operating between 1966 and 1972, it became the site of a federal demonstration project in 1980 to solidify and remove the accumulated nuclear waste, in addition to decontaminating and decommissioning the facility. Demolition began in 2017.

SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL

June 25, 2018

Vitrification demolition 72 percent complete

ASHFORD—As work continues on a number of projects throughout Ashford, the town board heard updates on a proposed solar facility as well as the decommissioning work at the West Valley Demonstration Project at a meeting June 13.

Over the past few years, the Town of Ashford has been working with the New York State Energy Research and Development Agency to build a solar farm on the Western New York Nuclear Service Center property. Recently, an agreement between the town and NYSERDA has been drafted for the town's use of the property, NYSERDA West Valley Program Director Paul Bembia said.

Along with the agreement, NYSERDA has completed its detailed information package to be sent to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for their evaluation of the project, which will be sent in the coming week.

At the West Valley Demonstration Site, crews continue to remove legacy waste from the site. Currently, there is around 5,000 cubic feet of legacy waste remaining on the site, which should take less than 10 shipments to get rid of and be completed in around a month, WVDP Director for the U.S. Department of Energy Bryan Bower said.

Demolition of the vitrification facility is around 72 percent complete and should be finished late summer or early fall. While the winter weather put them behind schedule, Bower said the recent good weather has allowed crews to make up some of that lost time.

Decommissioning work on the main plant is currently around 88 percent completed. Bower said after looking at the main plant with the contractor, it was decided to take down the facilities attached, but push the actual demolition of the main plant until the next contract.

“We will still be getting the utility room, the utility room extension, the load out facility, the office buildings and all those things attached to the main plant, but the core of the plant we are going to push out to the next contract,” Bower said.

With the term of the town’s assessor expiring in October 2019, Supervisor Charles Davis introduced a resolution to enter into a partnership with Cattaraugus County for all assessment functions to start in January 2019. After discussion, councilmembers John Pfeffer and Richard Bernstein, along with Davis, voted to go with the Cattaraugus County assessing, while councilmembers Jean Bond and William Heim voted no.

In other board news:

- Heim and Bond thanked the residents for starting to clean up their properties of dilapidated buildings and cars and hopes the trend continues to grow with more residents.
- The board approved a proclamation honoring resident June Churchill’s 100th birthday.
- Planning Board President Andrea Mellon reported they are researching signage designs for the Community Revitalization matching grant from Cattaraugus County, as it was determined that a lack of signage was noticeable for travelers.

The next Ashford Town Board meeting will be Wednesday, July 11 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ashford Community Center, located at 9377 Route 240, in West Valley.

WVDP Provides Training on Saving Lives in High-Threat Emergencies



Participants in a training for high-threat emergencies practice using tourniquets.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – [EM](#) and its cleanup contractor at the [West Valley Demonstration Project](#) (WVDP) recently conducted first responder training on lifesaving interventions in the event of emergencies such as active shooter situations.

CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV) Safeguards and Security Manager David Schuman held the tactical emergency casualty care training for WVDP security officers and fire and emergency management personnel throughout Cattaraugus County, where WVDP is located.

Schuman shared best practices on readily deployable lifesaving interventions and point-of-wounding care in high-threat emergency responses. About 30 people took part in the training at the West Valley Volunteer Hose Company Firemen's Memorial Hall, including 22 who work at WVDP.

"You can never overplan for emergencies," Schuman said. "To be prepared in our field, one must take advantage of beneficial training opportunities like this. You must always be learning what's new in the field that could help prevent incidents, protect workers, and save lives."



Trainees listen to instruction from Cattaraugus County Public Safety/Emergency Services Medical Director Dr. Brian Walters on the use of tourniquets to help stop the flow of blood in the event of a high-threat emergency.

Participants learned about the phases of care in a high-threat environment, how to care for patients at or near the point of wounding, and the roles and integration of emergency services in active shooter responses.

Trainees administered first aid to wounded victims in an active shooter scenario. This included the use of tourniquets, bandages for severe bleeding, and dressings to treat penetrating chest wounds. Research shows that the sooner personnel can give first aid after an active shooter incident, the better the chances are for recovery and survival.

“While the focus of our training was on response to aggressive deadly behavior events, these are techniques and skills the security officers can use in their daily jobs and workplace injuries as well,” Cattaraugus County Public Safety/Emergency Services Medical Director Dr. Brian Walters said.

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere

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WVDP hosts International Decommissioning Network

06-29-2018



WEST VALLEY – The West Valley Demonstration Project recently hosted the United States meeting for members of the International Atomic Energy Agency’s International Decommissioning Network Steering Committee. This IDN group included members from Australia, Canada, France, Germany, UK, the United States and the IAEA Secretariat.

“We were honored to have hosted the IDN at our EM site,” WVDP Director Bryan Bower, said. “Their work on decommissioning and remediation is important to West Valley, as well as other EM sites across the country.”

During their visit, IDN members toured the site and met with representatives from DOE, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority and the prime contractor CHBWV to learn more about the site’s history, current cleanup efforts, and future activities.

“The Steering Committee was very appreciative of both DOE and CHBWV senior personnel for their hospitality, participation and group discussions on lessons learned. The tour and project presentations provided an outstanding level of understanding of the West Valley cleanup program and how the work being done there relates to the IDN’s mission objectives” Andrew Szilagy, Director of EM’s Office of Infrastructure, Deactivation and Decommissioning Network; and co-chair of the IDN Steering Committee said.

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The IDN was launched at an IAEA conference in September 2007 involving its Departments of Nuclear Energy, Nuclear Safety and Security and Technical Co-operation. Its purpose is three- fold; to create awareness of decommissioning needs and priorities, promote implementation of safe, timely and cost-effective decommissioning and enhance training and the sharing of experience.

“Meetings like this one are aimed at taking advantage of a diversity of knowledge and experience from people involved in a senior capacity in a wide range of decommissioning programs to unlock impactful solutions to decommissioning activities,” Con Lyras, IDN Chair said. “Ultimately, the IDN strives to create an environment that fosters open and efficient worldwide sharing of practical and effective decommissioning experiences that lead to safe, economic, and timely dismantlement of disused nuclear facilities.”

“In sharing knowledge across country borders, the IDN looks to attract additional resources to the field to help accelerate the pace of decommissioning activities worldwide. Essentially, the IDN is a global ‘community of practice’ for decommissioning professionals focused on increasing visibility and leveraging learning for effective decommissioning solutions,” Patrick O’Sullivan from the IAEA Secretariat said.

The IAEA was created in 1957 as the world’s “Atoms for Peace” organization within the United Nations family following an initiative by President Eisenhower. It continues to work for the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology. Its key roles contribute to international peace and security, and to the United Nations goals for social, economic and environmental development.

SUNY Fredonia Receives State Archives Grant

FREDONIA — The State University at Fredonia will receive a \$13,235 Documentary Heritage Program grant to arrange and describe the Records of the Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes.

The State Archives administers the grants, which provide financial support to not-for-profit organizations that hold, collect and make available New York's historical records.

Since its inception in 1988, the program has provided over \$3 million in competitive grant funds to not-for-profit organizations statewide.

These funds support a variety of projects that help build a more comprehensive and equitable documentation of New York's history and culture. Grant projects may start on July 1 and all work on grant projects must be completed by June 30, 2019.

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

West Valley Demonstration Project reauthorization bill to go to full House for vote

- By RICK MILLER, Olean Times Herald

07-04-2018



U.S. Rep. Tom Reed, R-Corning

The reauthorization of the West Valley Demonstration Project has been approved by the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

The West Valley Demonstration Project Act was originally approved in 1980.

U.S. Rep. Tom Reed, R-Corning, said Tuesday the full House would now take up the bipartisan West Valley nuclear cleanup measure.

The reauthorization bill calls for \$75 million in annual funding, a \$10 million boost from the \$65 million annual base funding in recent years for the cleanup of the site of the nation's first commercial spent nuclear fuel reprocessing plant.

The U.S. Department of Energy and New York State Energy Research and Development Authority have spent about \$2 billion on the cleanup to date. The extent of the cleanup will determine the eventual cost, which could easily triple.

Reed, speaking on a conference call with reporters from across the 23rd Congressional District, said he was "very optimistic" the bipartisan bill would pass the House.

While the reauthorization bill sets a "foundation" of up to \$75 million for annual cleanup funding going forward, Reed said annual appropriation battles can still be expected.

OLEAN TIMES HERALD



"This legislation will authorize \$75 million per year through 2026 to continue the cleanup at West Valley and will provide a disposal path for all waste on the site," Reed said. "I care about the complete and total cleanup of sites our nuclear sites — including West Valley."

Reed thanked the Energy and Commerce committee members "for their help in moving the ball forward."

Reed has worked with the West Valley Citizen Task Force to raise awareness of the need for consistent funding to clean up the West Valley site.

ON ANOTHER TOPIC, Reed said he recently spoke to U.S. Navy Sec. Richard V. Spencer regarding his bill to require the Navy to consider the national security implications of removing equipment used to make pumps and compressors for a variety of ships by Siemens, which plans to move production lines from its Dresser-Rand plant in Wellsville.

Siemens announced in February plans to sell part of the business to Curtis-Wright and move other production to other Siemens plants. It will mean the loss of about 250 skilled union manufacturing jobs when fully implemented in 2020.

The Reed bill is moving through the House, which "bodes well for us from a House perspective." It calls to a study on the impact on national security of the relocation.

"If there is any type of realignment, I want to make sure national security concerns are addressed as a first and top priority," Reed told reporters.

"I want to put as much pressure on Siemens so they know where we stand on this transfer to Curtin-Wright," Reed added.

(Contact reporter Rick Miller at rmiller@oleantimesherald.com. Follow him on Twitter, @RMillerOTH)



West Valley Site Environmental Management System Earns New Certification



CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley Regulatory Strategy team members, left to right, Jerry Hoch, Janice Williams, Kim Mansfield, and David Klenk show the site's environmental management system program certificate issued by the International Organization for Standardization.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – The [International Organization for Standardization](#) (ISO) recently certified [EM's West Valley Demonstration Project](#) (WVDP) for new requirements for the site's environmental management system (EMS).

A [revised standard](#) by ISO specifies requirements for an EMS that WVDP can implement to minimize environmental impacts from cleanup operations.

With a membership of 161 national standards bodies, the independent, non-governmental international organization brings together experts to develop voluntary international standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges.

WVDP received the certification under its prime contractor CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV).



“This was a team effort that started in 2017 and involved several months of planning,” CHBWV Vice President of Regulatory Strategy Janice Williams said. “We are committed to performing our work in a safe and environmentally sound manner, and integrating safety, environmental, and regulatory requirements into everything we do.”

The revised standard calls for greater accountability from leadership, enhanced proactive environmental initiatives, improved communication internally and externally, and more rigorous environmental risk evaluations.

To earn the certification, WVDP and CHBWV conducted an analysis of the EMS program against the new standard, subsequent revisions based on the analysis, and a third-party review of the revised program.

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere

West Valley Site Completes Second Phase of Vitrification Facility Demolition



Crews take the “first bite” of the Vitrification Facility during the second phase of demolition.

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. – [EM](#) and cleanup contractor CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley (CHBWV) recently finished demolishing a heavily reinforced process cell and removed thousands of pieces of equipment in the Vitrification Facility at the [West Valley Demonstration Project](#) (WVDP).

“The CHBWV team continues to perform well in the safe execution of this high hazard work evolution,” WVDP Director Bryan Bower said. “This accomplishment allows the workforce to continue with the demolition of the Vitrification Facility, another step forward in the ultimate closure of the site.”

This latest work — the project’s second phase — began in November 2017. The process cell contained higher levels of radiological contamination than the building exterior and aisle areas demolished in the first phase.

“The CHBWV team is making great progress with the safe completion of the second phase of this facility’s demolition,” CHBWV President and General Manager Jeff Bradford said. “The Vitrification Facility demolition is one of the project areas we were able to accelerate using this year’s additional funding. This helps pave the way for Phase 3 work activities and the eventual completion of this major milestone.”



Workers tear down a portion of the Vitrification Facility containing a process cell.



With the second phase of the Vitrification Facility demolition project complete, all that remains for removal is the south wall, shield doors, small cranes, and minor equipment.



Using a variety of heavy equipment and specialized tools, workers safely removed, processed, and shipped for disposal four 7,188 pound in-cell coolers, six shield windows, and a 38,000-pound process crane.

In the third and final phase, crews will remove the 100-ton crane maintenance room shield door, 60-ton transfer tunnel shield door, cranes and equipment, and south wall. Completion of the Vitrification Facility demolition is planned for later this year.

The facility was used to solidify 600,000 gallons of high-level liquid radioactive waste from 1996 to 2002. This waste was generated from 1966 to 1972 during the reprocessing of spent fuel by Nuclear Fuel Services, the former operator of the site.

-Contributor: Joseph Pillittere



Serving Springville, Concord, Ashford, West Valley, Collins, Colden and East Concord

Ashford continues work on proposed solar farm

July 19, 2018

ASHFORD—The Town of Ashford continued to make progress in the development of a solar farm within the town at its board meeting July 11.

Paul Curran of BQ Energy made a presentation to board members about the company and what they will be doing with the proposed 50-acre solar facility at the Western New York Nuclear Service Center in West Valley.

Within the agreement, Ashford will be leasing the land for the solar farm from the WNY Nuclear Service Center, where the town will in turn lease the land to BQ Energy to do the work. While the term of the lease is not set yet, Curran said it is expected to be 25 years. Once the solar panels are operational, BQ Energy would then sell the power to residents and the town would receive \$50,000 a year through a host agreement.

Councilman Richard Bernstein asked about the options for the town once the 25 year lease expires. Once the lease ends, the town would then have three options, extend the lease, purchase the solar farm for a negotiated price or end the lease and have the solar panels removed from the property.

After the presentation and discussion, the board approved a notice of intent to act as the lead agency for the SEQR for the solar energy project at the WNY Nuclear Service Center.

“We are trying to make it more enticing for people to want to come to a progressive area,” Bernstein said. “Those types of things that we are doing whether it’s water, whether it’s power ... we are moving forward as a community.”

For the agreement between the town and WNY Nuclear Service Center, New York State Energy Research and Development Agency Program Director Paul Bembia said the attorneys between the two sides continue to negotiate terms. NYSERDA also completed the submission of its detailed information package to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for their evaluation of the solar farm project.

In other board news:

- The Ashford Planning Board is working on starting a community market at the West Valley fire hall from 6-8 p.m. to go along with Music at the Pond. Councilmember Jean Bond said they are tentatively working on getting it started by August.
- Code Enforcement Officer Larry Feldman will be researching a new rate schedule for the town to reflect rates in surrounding municipalities.
- The board approved a contract with Eagle Radio Technologies to update the constable radios in order for them to have better communication with the Cattaraugus County Sheriff’s Office.

The next Ashford Town Board meeting will be Wednesday, Aug. 8 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ashford Community Center, located at 9377 Route 240, in West Valley.