

CH2M-WG Idaho, LLC. News Release



Safely delivering the Idaho Cleanup Project

For Immediate Release

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Agencies propose to commence exhumation in third buried waste retrieval area

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State of Idaho are proposing to expand the removal of buried waste to a third retrieval area at the Idaho National Laboratory Site's Radioactive Waste Management Complex (RWMC). There are currently two adjacent excavation areas at the RWMC where crews are retrieving buried targeted radioactive and hazardous wastes, repackaging the material and sending the transuranic components to DOE's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in New Mexico.

The agencies have outlined their plans in an engineering evaluation/cost analysis document, which is available for public review and comment through July 23, 2008.

The document is available at the following link:

https://idahocleanupproject.com/Portals/0/documents/ARP-III_EE-CA_DOE-ID-11349.pdf.

Hard copies of the document may be viewed at an Administrative Record location in Idaho Falls at the INL Technical Library or in Boise at the Albertson Library on the campus of Boise State University.

In this latest action, the agencies are proposing to expand and continue targeted waste retrieval efforts in Pit 6 while the agencies prepare to issue the Operable Unit 7-13/14 Record of Decision (ROD) that will designate future retrieval areas. Excavation in the third retrieval area is expected to commence in Fall 2008.

Since early 2005, crews have been retrieving plutonium-contaminated filters, graphite and process sludge, oxidized (depleted) uranium, and solvent wastes from an area of the RWMC's Subsurface Disposal Area (SDA) called Pit 4. These materials originated at the Rocky Flats Plant near Denver, Colorado, during nuclear weapons production activities in the 1960s and were packaged in drums and boxes and sent to Idaho for disposal in the SDA over a period of 20 years, the last shipment of which arrived in the 1970s.

In 2007, the targeted waste retrieval effort was expanded to the eastern portion of Pit 4 and west end of Pit 6. These co-located pits contain some of the highest densities of radioactively-contaminated waste and solidified solvents in the SDA.

To date, the Department has excavated more than 11,000 cubic meters of waste material from Pits 4 and 6. These wastes have been repackaged into more than 6,600 waste containers. The radioactive wastes classified as transuranic wastes are prepared and shipped to DOE's WIPP facility for permanent disposal, while other classes of radioactive waste are sent to other appropriate off-site treatment and/or disposal facilities.

For a briefing or to request a copy of the engineering evaluation/cost analysis, citizens are encouraged to call the Idaho Cleanup Project at (800) 708-2680.

Comments may be mailed to:
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CH2M-WG Idaho, LLC, directs the Idaho Cleanup Project, the safe, environmental cleanup of the Idaho National Laboratory site, located 45 miles west of Idaho Falls. The 7-year, \$2.9 billion project, funded through the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management, focuses on early risk reduction and protection of the Snake River Plain Aquifer.

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