

DOE News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Agencies seek public comment on alternatives for cleanup of buried waste at INL site

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are asking the public to comment on alternatives for addressing buried waste at the DOE-Idaho Site's Radioactive Waste Management Complex Subsurface Disposal Area. The Radioactive Waste Management Complex was established in 1952 for the buried disposal of site-generated radioactive and hazardous wastes. From 1954 through 1970, the landfill received wastes from the Rocky Flats Plant in Colorado and other off-site generators.

Cleanup is occurring under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA, also known as Superfund). A Proposed Plan provides summary descriptions of a range of alternatives that were identified and analyzed in two previous environmental studies. The Proposed Plan also describes the preferred alternative identified by agencies.

The no action alternative is included for comparison only. Other alternatives incorporate certain common elements, including continued operation of the existing vapor vacuum extraction system to remove solvent vapors, followed by a final surface barrier and long-term monitoring and institutional controls. The alternatives are:

1. No action
2. Surface barrier
3. In situ grouting
4. Partial retrieval, treatment, and disposal
5. Full retrieval, treatment, and disposal

The preferred alternative identified by the agencies incorporates elements of Alternatives 2, 3 and 4. DOE has proposed expanding current targeted waste exhumations to 4.8 acres. However, the State has not agreed to accept DOE's proposed acreage and will instead await public review and comment before determining the appropriate acreage for waste retrieval.

Exhumed targeted waste will be removed, repackaged, and shipped offsite for disposal. The preferred alternative also includes applying grout to stabilize contaminants over a combined area of approximately 0.2 acres. It will also involve continued operation of the vacuum extraction system to remove solvent vapors, followed by a final surface barrier

over the 97-acre Subsurface Disposal Area and long-term monitoring and site access controls.

Further details on the risks and feasibility of the different alternatives are found in two documents: the *Remedial Investigation and Baseline Risk Assessment for Operable Unit 7-13/14* and the *Feasibility Study for Operable Unit 7-13/14*. Both documents are available in the Administrative Record at <http://ar.inel.gov/>. The documents are also available at the INL Technical Library in Idaho Falls and Boise State University's Albertsons Library.

A public comment period is open through November 21. Public open houses will be held as described below:

- **November 13:** Boise Centre on the Grove, Boise, from 6-8:30 p.m.
- **November 14:** College of Southern Idaho Taylor Student Union Building, Twin Falls, from 6-8:30 p.m.
- **November 15:** Shilo Inn, Idaho Falls, from 6-8:30 p.m.

The Agencies will give an orientation presentation of the project and Open House layout from 7-7:30 p.m. A court reporter will be available in the open house session to receive public comments.

Additionally, interested members of the public will be able to comment in writing and electronically at <https://idahocleanupproject.com>.

For a briefing on the environmental studies or to request a copy of the Proposed Plan, citizens are encouraged to call the Idaho Cleanup Project at (800) 708-2680.

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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For more information visit us on the Web at <https://idahocleanupproject.com>

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