

# OLEAN TIMES HERALD

## **West Valley officials hope to begin moving canisters soon**

By RICK MILLER, Olean Times Herald | Posted: Thursday, September 24, 2015 11:24 am

ASHFORD — West Valley Demonstration Project officials hope to begin moving casks containing highly radioactive waste to temporary storage on an open concrete pad in November or December.

New deputy general manager Scott Anderson of CH2MHill, the contractor for the cleanup being overseen by the U.S. Department of Energy, disclosed the target date Wednesday night during a meeting of the Citizens Task Force on West Valley Nuclear Waste at the Department of Energy offices in Ashford.

The main holdup is a 130-ton door to the “hot” cell where 275 of the 10-foot-tall steel radioactive waste canisters sit in the Main Process Building. The door, installed in the 1960s when the plant was in the business of recovering uranium from spent nuclear fuel rods, is stuck in the closed position.

The steel canisters will be removed from the storage cell, then packed into a five-unit concrete overpack structure with remotely welded steel lids. That overpack unit then fits inside a storage cask.

It will then be hauled from the Main Process Building to a special concrete pad hundreds of yards away with a vertical cask transporter that, when fully loaded, weighs more than 85 tons. Parts of the floor in the building had to be reinforced, as did parts of the haul road.

Engineers are working to find parts for the motor and gearbox that control the 130-ton door to the “hot” cell, Anderson said. They need to open the door to be able to install remote cameras in the room before bringing out any of the radioactive canisters, he said.

A test drive of the system using canisters filled with steel shot to approximate the weight of the real radioactive ones, welding them into the overpack unit, placing it in the concrete storage cask and hauling it to the pad was done over several weeks in August, Anderson said.

The test drive showed engineers several issues that will need to be addressed before the first radioactive canisters are removed later this year.

There are currently 16 storage casks at the West Valley cleanup site. Fifty-six more are on order. The last of the 275 canisters won't be removed until 2017.

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The canisters have been in storage since completion of the vitrification process that turned 600,000 gallons of highly radioactive liquid waste into 275 glass logs. The cleanup has cost more than \$2 billion.

The next phase of the cleanup can't start until the Main Process Building is demolished and removed to get at the source of a plume of strontium-90 that starts beneath the plant and extends toward Erdman Brook, which empties into Cattaraugus Creek. A special permeable barrier wall treats the radioactive material before water passes through it.

Paul Bembia, site director for the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, said results from an aerial radioactive survey conducted by NYSERDA and the Department of Energy have not been finalized. Some off-site property owners would be contacted soon for permission to take soil samples from their land, he noted.

"We're working now to make arrangements with property owners," he said.

The aerial survey by Remote Sensings Lab Co. flew over West Valley and 90 square miles of surrounding area, including the length of Cattaraugus Creek to Lake Erie, Bembia said. He offered no further details.

There were also reports on damage from heavy rain that hit the area July 14, including erosion control structures on Erdman Brook and Frank's Creek, which bisect the site. There was no critical emergency damage, said Bryan Bower, Department of Energy site director.

The spillway on Lake 1 was breached, but not the dam, he said. The repairs on Erdman Brook are nearly complete, and crews plan to move soon to Frank's Creek to shore up temporary erosion control measures.

The area got nearly 4 inches of rain over 24 hours, including 1.8 inches in a half-hour period, which exceeds the 10-year recurrence estimate, officials said.

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

# SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL



September 26, 2015 Springville Journal

## West Valley Cub Scouts give back



On Sept. 28, the West Valley Cub Scouts Pack 615 participated in their adopt a highway project on behalf of CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley LLC, as a thank you for sponsoring their pack.

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# THE BUFFALO NEWS

## West Valley cleanup marks a first with waste transfer



A sign warning of radioactive contamination is posted at the West Valley Demonstration Project. Derek Gee/Buffalo News file photo

**By Matt Glynn** / News Business Reporter

Cleanup of a former nuclear reprocessing plant in Cattaraugus County is taking another step forward.

The West Valley Demonstration Project said liquid waste converted into a glass substance is being placed into long-term, outdoor, passive storage.

Moving the waste from West Valley's main plant to an interim storage pad will clear the way for demolition of the process building.

The waste containers are configured in a way that complies with state and federal regulations "and supports future off-site shipment of the container," a press release from

the demonstration project said.

Canisters containing the waste will be transferred into a five-compartment, stainless steel “overpack,” and placed inside a vertical storage cask. The cask is a storage unit which, when holding five canisters, weighs 87.5 tons. (As a comparison, an M1 Abrams tank weighs about 68 tons.) Special transport equipment was purchased to move the casks.

Each cask has a four-inch-thick steel liner and 20 inches of steel-reinforced concrete. They have a minimum design life of 50 years. A total of 55 casks will be moved to the interim storage pad at the site.

“This effort is a culmination of four years’ work to begin the safe removal of the high-level waste canisters from the former reprocessing facility,” said Bryan Bower, demonstration project director. A firm called CH2M Hill BWXT West Valley was awarded a contract by the U.S. Department of Energy in 2011 for phase one of the decommissioning.

The West Valley Demonstration Project is located on the Western New York Nuclear Service Center, about 35 miles from Buffalo. It was formerly used to reprocess commercial nuclear fuel. The reprocessing ended in 1972. The liquid waste was turned into a glass-like substance between 1996 and 2002, and placed into 275 canisters inside the main plant process building.

Relocation of all high-level waste is scheduled to be complete in 2018.

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# First casks with highly radioactive containers moved at West Valley

By RICK MILLER, Olean Times Herald | Posted: Friday, November 13, 2015 10:45 am

WEST VALLEY — The first huge concrete cask with five containers of highly radioactive waste was moved to long-term outdoor storage earlier this week at the West Valley Demonstration Project.

A spokeswoman for CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley, LLC, the site cleanup contractor, said Thursday morning the first high-level waste cask was moved Tuesday from the Main Process Building to a large concrete pad several hundred yards away.

The 87.5-ton concrete cask, with a 50-year minimum design life, was moved down a reinforced haul road to the on-site interim storage pad. Fifty-five more are scheduled to join it over the next few years, said Lynette Bennett of CH2M Hill BWXT West Valley.

Five containers of high-level waste will be transferred to each stainless steel overpack using remote-handling equipment to protect workers. The overpack is then placed in the concrete vertical storage cask.

The five-pack storage system design is based on spent nuclear fuel dry-cask storage systems in use throughout the U.S. and around the world — primarily for temporary storage of fuel at nuclear plants. The system was modified to handle long-term storage of vitrified high-level waste, said officials.

Relocation of the 275 high-level stainless steel containers with solidified radioactive glass from more than 600,000 gallons of radioactive liquid waste at the West Valley site is expected to be concluded in 2018.

Once all the high-level steel containers are removed from the Main Process Building, it can be demolished to gain access to the source of an underground plume of strontium 90 which made its way off the property before being intercepted and treated a few years ago.

The high-level waste casks will remain at the site until a national repository for such radioactive waste is available. The U.S. halted work on the proposed repository in Nevada more than five years ago and does not currently have an alternate site.

Extensive planning, design, construction, building modification and the purchase of special transport equipment was required to transfer a cask holding five canisters from inside the plant to the on-site storage pad. The work is being performed under the Phase I decommissioning contract that was awarded in August 2011.

The vertical storage containers, which are fabricated on-site, include a 4-inch thick steel liner and 20 inches of steel-reinforced concrete to ensure the high-level radioactive waste remains securely

contained, officials said.

West Valley Demonstration Project Director Bryan Bower said, "I could not be more proud of this team. This effort is a culmination of four years' work to begin the safe removal of the high-level waste canisters from the former reprocessing facility, allowing for the eventual demolition of the building."

Paul Bembia, director for the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's West Valley Site Management Program, said "The relocation of the high-level radioactive waste to the new interim storage facility is a significant step forward in the cleanup effort at the West Valley site."

The West Valley Demonstration Project is located on the Western New York Nuclear Service Center and was once used for commercial reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel.

In 1962, Nuclear Fuel Services constructed the first and only commercial nuclear fuel reprocessing plant in the U.S. in West Valley.

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

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2015

# OLEAN TIMES HERALD

## W. Valley radiological survey levels said to be low *Cesium-137 shrinking northwest of project*

By RICK MILLER

Olean Times Herald

ASHFORD HOLLOW — An aerial radiological survey of the West Valley Demonstration Project shows a cesium-137 “prong” to be shrinking northwest of the site in the Ashford nuclear cleanup area.

Paul Bembia, site director of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, which commissioned the survey with the U.S. Department of Energy, said the survey showed radiological levels are low. The results were reported Wednesday at the quarterly public meeting of the West Valley Demonstration Project at the Ashford Office Complex on Route 219.

“I don’t believe there are any public safety issues,” Bembia said.

Dr. William Beal of Remote Sensing Laboratories, the company that conducted the survey, as well as aerial surveys of the area in 1979 and 1984, said the survey’s goal was not just to map areas of concern surrounding the Western New York Nuclear Service Center, but also another 90 square miles along Cattaraugus Creek and its floodplains, to Lake Erie. Frank’s Creek, which crosses the WVDP site, empties into Buttermilk Creek, which connects to Cattaraugus Creek.

Beal said the aerial survey, taken between Sept. 22 and Oct. 2, 2014, found similar results as previous studies. However, previous studies did not include the entire length of Cattaraugus Creek, he said.

Results of ground surveys to confirm the results of the aerial survey are not complete. The Seneca Nation of Indians recently gave permission to sample two sites adjacent to Cattaraugus Creek on the Cattaraugus Reservation. Those results are expected to be available in February, Bembia said.

Beal said the cesium -137 prong that extends northeast from the site and toward Cattaraugus Creek appears to have weakened, probably due to the decay of the radioactive material and partly due to dilution and dispersion.

The measurements were made with an aerial system mounted on a Bell 412 helicopter with 12 externally mounted detectors, including sodiumiodide gamma ray detectors. The helicopter flew grids over the area and cited 31 sites for ground investigation.

While results from much of the Zoar Valley gorge to the west of the WVDP site showed signs of cesium-137, Beal said it appeared the geography of the area combined for “false positive” results.

“There is no cesium present in Zoar Valley at least to the levels we can detect,” Beal said.

There were a few areas along Cattaraugus Creek where there were elevated cesium-137 readings, including below Scoby Dam off Route 219 in Springville. The 1984 study found several sites with slightly elevated cesium levels along the creek as well. Most was found upstream in Franks and Buttermilk creeks, however.

An executive summary of the study said, “The aerial radiation measurements for these areas are only slightly elevated above observed background radiation levels.”

*(Contact reporter Rick Miller  
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OTH)*

# Legislature approves \$330K security contract with West Valley

By Rick Miller, Special to The Press | Posted: Thursday, November 12, 2015 3:00 pm

LITTLE VALLEY — Cattaraugus County lawmakers approved a security contract Tuesday with the contractor performing the cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project site.

The Cattaraugus County Sheriff's Office has a full-time officer stationed at the West Valley site, operated by the U.S. Department of Energy. The contract expired Sept. 30 but has remained in effect pending renewal of the contract.

The actual cost of providing on-site security services to CH2M Hill BWXT West Valley LLC, through Sept. 30, 2016, is \$330,734. The resolution was sponsored by Public Safety Committee Chairman Patrick Murphy, R-Cattaraugus.

County lawmakers also approved an extension of the \$6.5 million contract for the county's new emergency communications system with the New York State Division of Homeland Security. The contract was to have concluded at the end of this year but will be extended to Dec. 2, 2016.

The new communications system will offer state-of-the art, high-band radio communications for police, fire, ambulance and emergency services. Other municipal services will be eligible to use the new system as soon as new frequencies are assigned.

Concern by Canadian authorities over some of the new fire frequencies being assigned here has slowed the process as well.

Land had to be cleared at several new tower sites, including one on Indiana Avenue in the town of Olean, new equipment structures needed to be constructed and towers had to be built.

IN OTHER ACTION, legislators:

Approved a two-year contract with two one-year renewal options with Dataval Inc., Fayetteville, N.Y., for water monitoring at the county's two closed landfills at Five Points in Mansfield and Farwell in Ischua for \$2,105 in 2016 and \$1,769 in 2017.

Contracted with the Seneca-Salamanca Chamber of Commerce Inc. for a manager-coordinator for the information center off the westbound lanes of Interstate 86 in Allegany. In return for the employee manning the center 15 hours a week, including six to eight hours on Sundays and holidays, the county is responsible for providing five hours a day for 151 days, plus additional hours on Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter.

Authorized the Department of Economic Development, Planning and Tourism to apply for up to \$500,000 in state matching funds for 2016 and to spend up to \$70,000 for I Love NY Matching Funds Program in 2015.

Set a public hearing for Nov. 24 on a local law increasing the private pay nursing home rates.

Took no action to set a public hearing on a proposed local law titled “Cattaraugus County Road Preservation Law,” sponsored by William Sprague, D-Yorkshire, who wants to hold trucking companies accountable for damage to county roads. The proposed law is being held in the Public Works and Finance committees.

# SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL



*The newspaper of Boston, Colden, Concord, Springville and West Valley*

November 21, 2015 Edition

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## Thanks, WVDP for donation

Editor:

Friday, Nov. 13, was definitely a lucky day for the Springville-Concord Food Pantry.

Around 12:30 p.m., a truck pulled up to the door and an army of volunteers from the West Valley Demonstration Project went to work. They carried case after case of

vegetables, soup, pancake mix, peanut butter and other staples. They put turkeys in our freezers, carted away the oversized boxes and were last seen heading to their next drop off.

It is such a good feeling to know that the holiday tables of many will be filled by the generosity of these good

folks.

We can't thank them enough for their support year after year. We are ever so grateful

Jean Kamats

Sue Owen

Co-chairs

Springville-Concord  
Community Food Pantry

## WVDP donates to local food pantries

By Rich Place, Managing Editor | Posted: Wednesday, November 18, 2015 3:00 pm



### Food Drive 2015

Volunteers from the West Valley Demonstration Project gather in front of Sander's Parkview with donations that went out to nine area food pantries.

As surely as Thanksgiving falls on the fourth Thursday of November every year, employees from the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP)

can be counted on to volunteer their time and efforts to deliver food right before the holiday.

Employees volunteering their time and effort on Friday, Nov. 13 met at Sander's Parkview in Salamanca before distributing food to nine area food pantries.

The WVDP Food Drive fundraising effort, including food donations from employees themselves, gathered 114,843 pounds of food, according to volunteer coordinator Lettie Chilson. Also, 360 turkeys were distributed.

The drive again partnered with Sander's Parkview, as well as Springville Wal-Mart, this year for donations and the purchase of many of the food items.

The food on Friday was delivered to two food pantries in Springville and also pantries in Ellicottville, Franklinville, Delevan, West Valley, Little Valley, Cattaraugus and Dayton.

The drive has been conducted annually and Chilson said the goal each year is to provide pantries with the food prior to the Thanksgiving holiday. The donation aids the pantries not only at Thanksgiving but also as they head into the cold winter months.

The WVDP has been conducting the food drive annual since 1989 and has collected more than 1 million pounds of food, according to drive organizers.

# OLEAN TIMES HERALD

## Reed cites accomplishments for 2015

By RICK MILLER, Olean Times Herald | Posted: Tuesday, December 22, 2015 12:15 pm

U.S. Rep. Tom Reed, R-Corning, cited some of his accomplishments for 2015 on Monday, including continued funding for the nuclear cleanup at the **West Valley Demonstration Project** and a funding source for the Route 219 Expressway.

In the just-passed congressional budget agreement signed by President Barack Obama, **\$60 million in funding for the West Valley cleanup was included**, Reed told reporters during a telephone press conference Monday.

Reed said the appropriation “is a big win for the district.”

He said calls for much higher annual funding levels in the \$100 million range are not realistic.

“We have tried to advocate for more funding,” Reed said.

“The \$60 million funding level will allow them to move the ball in a positive direction. I want to get it cleaned up as soon as possible.”

The addition of a special pot of money for a rural funding, and special projects like the proposed Route 219 expressway advocated by Continental 1, is also good for Cattaraugus County, Reed said.

“I think there is an opportunity to get some things done, especially in the rural parts of New York, Reed told reporters.

Reed said he’s making sure Gov. Andrew Cuomo and New York State Department of Transportation officials are aware of the potential pot of federal money for the Route 219 expressway between Salamanca and the Springville area.

“We have to put the pressure on Albany,” he said.

Other “wins” for the district in the spending bill include the tax breaks the bill made permanent, a multimillion-dollar investment in photonics and advanced manufacturing, and housing and mass transit funding that will boost the Hornell railroad car manufacturing facility, Reed said.

The Farm Bill passed earlier this year was another plus for the district, he said.

“I’m never satisfied,” Reed said. “We can always do better. There’s a lot more to be done.”

(Contact reporter Rick Miller at [miller@oleantimesherald.com](mailto:miller@oleantimesherald.com). Follow him on Twitter, @RMillerOTH)

## DOE RELEASES REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR THE WEST VALLEY DEMONSTRATION PROJECT TECHNICAL SERVICES TO DEVELOP A SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT PROCUREMENT

**Cincinnati** -- The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today issued a Request for Information (RFI) seeking to solicit input via capability statements from interested parties with the specialized capabilities necessary to meet the requirements of the Draft Performance Work Statement (PWS) for the West Valley Demonstration Project Technical Services to develop a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Procurement. Within these capability statements, DOE is seeking feedback from contractors and other interested parties regarding options for innovative approaches for the performance of the Draft PWS, as well as, insight into potential contracting alternatives. This market research will assist DOE with identifying interested and capable sources and developing its acquisition strategy. Key market research goals include identifying and minimizing barriers to competition, evaluating small business capabilities, identifying risks, identifying potential requirements definition and contract alternatives, and identifying appropriate terms and conditions.

DOE and NYSERDA (the agencies) intend to conduct this work jointly, are using a tripartite contract structure and sharing in oversight and cost of the work.

This RFI is for market research purposes only and no proposals are being sought. The announcement is posted on the Federal Business Opportunities website at: <https://www.FBO.gov/> and on the procurement website at: [https://www.emcbc.doe.gov/SEB/WVDP\\_Technical\\_Services/](https://www.emcbc.doe.gov/SEB/WVDP_Technical_Services/)

## Ashford board reorganizes, looks to future of town

January 15, 2016 - Around Town, Business News, News - Tagged: Ashford, town board, Water district - no comments

By Colleen Mahoney

ASHFORD— The Ashford Town Board is going to explore the possibility of creating a solar farm, it announced at its Jan. 13 meeting. Newly appointed Town Supervisor Charles Davis said the town is discussing what can be done with the West Valley Demonstration Project site, in the future.

Along with the planning board, the town board is reviewing the town's comprehensive plan. Davis explained that the comprehensive plan is an integral part of receiving grants for town projects, and needs to be completed. Jeff Smith, from Municipal Solutions, will be at the next board meeting to present the feasibility of creating a solar farm. The land at the Demonstration site could benefit the town, if utilized the right way, Davis said.

A public meeting was set regarding the water district, for Feb. 23. Clark Patterson Lee – Design Professionals will be in attendance to explain the project and answer residents' questions. Board member Rich Bernstein said it would be a good opportunity for residents within the district to get a better understanding of the project, as well as what it means for them. The board was updated on the status of the district, which is being funded in part by a New York Water Infrastructure Grant. The grant is in the amount of \$1,923,840, Davis reported the remaining cost will be covered by a zero percent interest loan, in the amount of \$1,282,560. The town currently has a bond anticipation notes outstanding of \$250,000, with an intent to be in financing before another BAN is needed.

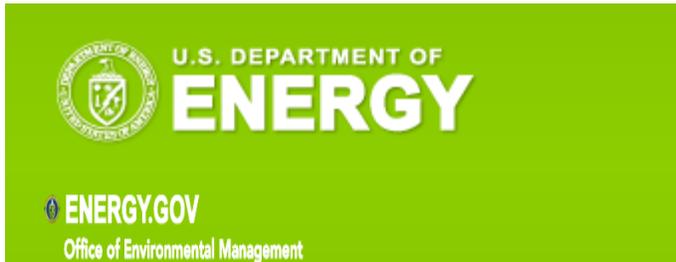
Clark Patterson Lee is reviewing drawings for the system, and once recommendations are met, bidding will be open. Board member William Heim requested the bids include performance reviews from other municipalities, adding that it's important for Ashford to know if the service was satisfactory. The board anticipates bidding will be open for the distribution system in March.

The board held their reorganizational meeting, where the following appointments were made:

Susan Feldman, supervisor's bookkeeper at \$11.50 per hour; Gary Perkins as code enforcement officer for one year; William King as the town historian with a \$50 per year salary; Frances Engles to the youth recreation commission for six years; Michael Boberg as a youth member to the recreation commission for one year; Engles, Angela Ghani, Mary Kay Williams and Christopher Gerwitz as justice court clerks at \$10.75 per hour; Eric Boberg to the board of appeals for five years; David Cobo as chairman of the board of appeals for one year; Tom Allan to the planning board for five years; Andrea Mellon as chairman of the planning board for one year; Feldman as the community center building custodian at \$9.60 per hour and Feldman as the assistant records management officer for one year.

Board member John Pfeffer was appointed deputy supervisor.

The next Town of Ashford Board meeting will be Feb. 10 at 7:30 p.m.



## Contract Awarded for West Valley Demonstration Project Data Management System, Technical Services

January 20, 2016 - 12:30pm

### MEDIA CONTACT

- Lynette Chafin, 513-246-0461 [Lynette.Chafin@emcbc.doe.gov](mailto:Lynette.Chafin@emcbc.doe.gov)
  - **Cincinnati** - The Department of Energy (DOE) today announced the award a Time and Materials Task Order under the Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract previously awarded to North Wind Solutions, LLC of Knoxville, TN. The Task Order will have a maximum value of \$1.4 million over 3 years. Work performed under this task order will be performed at the West Valley Demonstration Project, West Valley, NY.
  - Under the task order, the contractor will provide technical services for hardware and software maintenance, application development, network infrastructure support, and database administration for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) Data Management System (DMS). The DMS manages environmental monitoring data that will be used to support decommissioning activities at the WVDP.