

## Draft EIS for Phase 2 cleanup at West Valley set for 2025

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WEST VALLEY — A Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Phase 2 of the cleanup at the **West Valley Demonstration Project** is expected to be published in 2025.

There will be a six-month public comment period after the DEIS is published, members of the West Valley Citizens Task Force learned earlier this week during the **West Valley Demonstration Project's** quarterly meeting.

A Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision would be issued after the Department of Energy and **New York State Energy Research and Development Authority** answered all the questions posed during the public comment period.

The range of cleanup the DEIS will address include leaving underground facilities like tanks with radioactive residue and the low-level radioactive material disposed of in the State Disposal Area and the National Disposal Area, removing everything from the site or a hybrid of the two.

DOE and **NYSERDA** officials are also talking about the possibility of selective removal of radioactive material and the use of engineered barriers to divert water from facilities on the site.

More than \$3 billion have been spent so far in Phase 1 of the cleanup — removing buildings from the site. Complete removal of material from the site could increase the cost to \$10 billion or more. The site has streams flowing through it and near the base of the plateau containing the landfills. Those streams enter Cattaraugus Creek, which empties into Lake Erie.

Demolition or deconstruction of the Main Plant Process Building where the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel to recover uranium and plutonium took place from 1966 to 1972, started in September. It is expected to take 30 months before the five-story facility is leveled to the ground.

Another item of news from Wednesday's quarterly meeting was plans for a dedicated website for the cleanup project's Probabilistic Performance Assessment (PPA) of the future impact of erosion at the site in the town of Ashford.

The PPA website will be available to the public.

Phase 1 will end with the Main Plant Process Building being brought to ground level. Phase 1B will involve removing the below ground portion of the facility to expose the source of a leak of strontium 90 that has been coming from beneath the foundation for decades.

A permeable treatment wall was built to intercept the underground strontium prong. It consisted of a material similar to kitty litter that let contaminated water through, but holds the radioactive elements in the material.

There are 16 continuously running sampling sites within a mile of the Main Plant Process Building to detect any radioactivity escaping the site during the demolition. Those ambient air sampling sites results will be available on the cleanup contractor's website — [CHBWV.com](http://CHBWV.com).

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There are real-time air sampling monitors closer to the demolition work which can trigger a work stoppage if a spike in radioactivity is detected.

The dust from the demolition is reduced with special misters with a compound added to bind to particles. The resulting water is collected and treated before it is released into a lagoon. Water that cannot be treated onsite due to high levels of radioactive material will be shipped offsite for treatment.

Most of the rubble from the Main Plant Process Building is being placed in intermodal containers and will be removed by train. Contaminated material will be stored onsite until it can be removed from the site.

More than 98% of the radioactive contamination in the Main Plant Process Building has been removed over the past 25 years.