

Troubled DOE Facilities At A Glance

NUCLEAR WEAPONS PRODUCTION FACILITY

VITAL STATISTICS

PROBLEMS & ACCIDENTS *

FEED MATERIALS
PRODUCTION CENTER
Fernald, OH

- converts uranium to metal

- contractor: Westinghouse Materials Company
- 1,200 employees
- more than one million people/ 20 mile radius
- Shutdown for ten weeks (10/7 - 12/18) due to workers' strike over health benefits.

2 silos are filled with hundreds of thousands of cubic feet of radioactive wastes that emit radon gas. The plant has released more than 380,000 lbs. of uranium oxide, contaminating soil and water supplies.

HANFORD RESERVATION
near Richmond, WA

- recycles uranium and extracts plutonium from irradiated nuclear fuel

- contractor: Westinghouse Hanford Company
- 12,000 employees
- 50,000 people/ 10 mile radius.
- 5/86: N Reactor shutdown.
- 2/88: N Reactor placed on indefinite standby. All 9 reactors are now shutdown.

Liquid radioactive and toxic wastes were dumped in unlined trenches, from 1944 until the early 1980s. The wastes are contaminating the Columbia River and large underground reservoirs used for drinking water and irrigation. Hanford has nearly half of the nation's military wastes and hundreds of inactive hazardous and/or radioactive waste sites that qualify for inclusion on the EPA's Superfund list.

1945-1956: According to government documents, Iodine 131 and other radioactive materials were released from Hanford to determine their distribution and effects on local populations.

IDAHO NATIONAL ENGINEERING LABORATORY
near Idaho Falls, ID

- recycles uranium from irradiated fuel from submarines and experimental reactors for Savannah River plant

- contractor: EG&G Idaho/ Westinghouse Idaho Nuclear Company
- 7,500 employees
- 120,000 people/ 50 mile radius
- DOE has plans to build at least 2 new reactors.

The plant has discharged radioactive and toxic wastes into unlined waste lagoons, and these wastes have leached into the Snake River Aquifer.

1959: 350,000 curies of fission products released into the atmosphere.

1961: Reactor exploded, killing three workers.

1983: A major earthquake (7.0 on Richter scale) was centered miles from the plant.

KANSAS CITY PLANT
Kansas City, MO

- produces electronic components for weapons; assembly of warheads

- contractor: Bendix
- 7,853 employees

PCBs and other carcinogens are stored in leaching waste pits contaminating sewer lines and soils. The plant has also released hundreds of tons of toxic chemicals into the atmosphere.

LAWRENCE LIVERMORE NATIONAL LABORATORIES
Livermore, CA

- designs nuclear weapons

- contractor: University of California and AT&T
- 8,400 employees and 2,000 contract employees
- 5 million people/ 50 mile radius

The lab has leached toxic contamination from its operations into the ground water and ranks 3rd in severity among facilities in the 1988 DOE Environmental Survey Report. According to the report, the contamination is expected to migrate to nearby residential communities dependent on ground water.

1970: 300,000 curies of tritium released due to pressure failure.

1973: Plutonium-239 released into the soil.

LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORIES
Los Alamos, NM

- designs nuclear weapons; blends plutonium

- contractor: University of California
- 8,100 employees
- 19,286 people/ 5 mile radius;
- 170,000 people/ 50 mile radius.

Test firings of high explosives have contaminated the test area with uranium and other toxic and radioactive materials.

MOUND FACILITY
Miamisburg, OH

- manufactures detonators, plutonium components for satellites; recycles tritium

- contractor: Monsanto Research Company
- 2,300 employees
- 10 miles southwest of Dayton.

Waste pits at the site are believed to be leaching toxic chemicals into soil. Officials are concerned about plutonium leaching into ground water.

1969: Pipe carrying high level waste, including plutonium, burst, contaminating adjacent areas. For 5 years after that, plutonium "migrated" into local canals and water holes.

NEVADA TEST SITE
near Las Vegas, NV

- tests nuclear weapons

- contractor: Reynolds Electric & Engineering/ Holmes & Narver/ Fenix & Scisson
- 8,800 employees
- as many as 80,000 people visit nearby (25 miles) Death Valley in one day.

The site is where nuclear weapons were tested above ground until 1961 and below ground since then. About 75 square miles of the site is thoroughly contaminated with and plutonium, cesium, strontium and other radioactive materials. Downwinders have experienced elevated cancer rates: thyroid and bone cancer are many times the national average.

1986: Deliberate release of radioactive xenon into the atmosphere.