

## **ECA Update June 2, 2016**

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DOE Consent Based Siting Public Meeting  
Boston, MA

[Register to view online](#)

**June 2016**

**06**

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House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus  
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## Feds plan public meeting in Boston on 'consent-based' approach to siting nuclear waste facilities

Mass Live

June 1, 2016

[LINK](#)

The U.S. Department of Energy will roll into Boston Thursday as part of an 8-city national tour designed to gather public input on how to solve the nation's nuclear waste problem.

The DOE hopes a "consent-based siting model" will lead to the creation of one or more facilities to store, manage, and dispose of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste from power plants and national defense activities.

The federal government is obligated under the 1982 Nuclear Waste Policy Act to create permanent storage for the spent fuel, but has failed to do so, leading to lawsuits from the nuclear industry. The idea of creating storage at Nevada's Yucca Mountain, introduced some 30 years ago, met with political gridlock and never made it off the drawing board.

The Obama administration withdrew support for Yucca Mountain in 2009, and a blue ribbon commission recommended a collaborative, consent-based approach to siting any new facility. Last year, energy secretary Ernest Moniz announced he would begin the process.

# 08

Oak Ridge EMSSAB Meeting

June 2016

# 08

Paducah EM SSAB Meeting

August 2016

# 11

Third Annual  
Intermountain  
Energy Summit  
Idaho Falls, ID  
[Visit website](#)

September 2016

# 13

Save the Date: ECA Peer Exchange  
Contact Ivana Brancaccio at  
[ivana@energyca.org](mailto:ivana@energyca.org)  
for more information

September 2016

# 14-15

2016 National Cleanup Workshop

In January, the DOE launched an effort to create temporary storage sites in West Texas and New Mexico while the question of finding a permanent location is hashed out.

Transportation is also up for discussion as the DOE crafts an integrated waste management system. Earlier this month federal officials said 3,880 spent fuel rods at the unplugged Vermont Yankee nuclear plant would likely be moved offsite via rail, not trucks. Owner Entergy is seeking state approval for an above-ground storage facility, while most rods remain in a cooling pool inside the now-dark reactor building.

Spent fuel is stored on-site at more than a dozen closed nuclear power plants, including four in New England — Maine Yankee, Vermont Yankee, Yankee Rowe and Connecticut Yankee.

There are around 75,000 tons of uranium and 12 million cubic feet of high-level waste in storage facilities scattered across the country, according to the DOE. Nearly 20 percent of U.S.

electricity is generated from nuclear power, resulting in about 2,000 metric tons of spent fuel each year.

The DOE says it's seeking a permanent and sustainable solution, wants a "flexible framework for engaging with potential host communities," and hopes to work with local governments, states, and tribal nations to ensure safety, build trust, and "adapt operations based on lessons learned."

Thursday's agenda ([pdf](#)) will feature a presentation by John Kotek, the DOE's acting assistant secretary for nuclear energy. A panel of experts will present a range of perspectives, and participants will have the opportunity to comment or ask questions. Small group discussions will ensue, followed by closing remarks.

The public is invited, and encouraged to [preregister](#).

If you go:

Hilton Alexandria Mark Center  
Alexandria, VA  
Visit [cleanupworkshop.com](http://cleanupworkshop.com)

November 2016

16-18

Save the Date: 2016  
Intergovernmental Meeting  
New Orleans, LA

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*Bulletin* [here](#).

What: [Consent Based Siting Meeting, U.S. Dept. of Energy](#)

Where: Hyatt Regency, One Avenue de Lafayette, Boston

When: June 2, 4-10 p.m.

### **Regulator warns of long, costly cleanup at Los Alamos lab**

AP: WRAL

June 1, 2016

[LINK](#)

New Mexico's top environmental regulator says it could take the federal government another decade and more than \$4 billion to clean up the hazardous waste and contamination remaining at one of the nation's premier nuclear weapons laboratories.

Environment Secretary Ryan Flynn provided the estimate Wednesday to state lawmakers as he outlined proposed changes to a consent order that guides cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

It's been more than a decade since New Mexico and the U.S. Energy Department first signed the order. Flynn told lawmakers that it's time to move from investigating contaminated sites at the northern New Mexico lab to doing real work.

"Everyone is very eager to move forward and I think the priorities of the department as well as the communities are all in line," Flynn said. "We want to accelerate cleanup and we want to try to leverage more funding for cleanup. How we get there, there are differences of opinion, but I think we all share those same goals."

The Environment Department is reviewing roughly 30 public comments received over the last 60 days, but it's unclear when a final decision on the order will be made.

The state estimates there are hundreds of individual sites on lab property and around the town of Los Alamos that are still home to tons of waste and contamination left behind by decades of nuclear research and development.

Since deadlines were missed under the old agreement, the state wants to make the proposed order more flexible by establishing a work plan that's updated each year. If the federal government and its contractors fail to meet the annual expectations, there will be penalties.

Rep. Stephanie Garcia Richards, a Democrat whose district includes the lab, and other lawmakers said they appreciate the new approach. Garcia Richards said the proposal allows for the state to make decisions as new information becomes available, whether it concerns the threat of wildfire or a new plume of contamination.

Other lawmakers questioned whether the federal government would adequately fund cleanup in the future.

Flynn expects funding to remain steady, but he said additional money is more likely if the state and DOE can clearly articulate the work that will be done each year.

State officials have suggested dedicating \$255 million a year to environmental work at Los Alamos, much more than the request of \$189 million for the next fiscal year.

### **Tarcza named manager of DOE's Oak Ridge office**

Knox News Sentinel

May 31, 2016

[LINK](#)

Kenneth R. Tarcza, former chief of staff for the Army Research Development and Engineering Command, has been named manager of the U.S. Department of Energy's Oak Ridge office.

As part of that role, he will oversee the Integrated Support Center, which provides services to various national laboratories and Office of Science sites.

His appointment was announced Monday by the DOE's Office of Science.

Tarcza retired from the Army in 2015 as a colonel. Among his career roles, he served with the Army Research Laboratory at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland.

"Ken brings to the table an impressive portfolio of qualifications," Joseph McBrearty, deputy director for field operations at the DOE's Office of Science, said in a statement.

Tarcza holds a bachelor's of science degree in mechanical engineering from the U.S. Military Academy and a master's degree and doctorate from the University of Texas.

In his Oak Ridge role, Tarcza will coordinate activities with his federal counterparts at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory Site Office, Office of Environmental Management and the National Nuclear Security Administration's Production Office.

### **DOE IG reviewing Hanford chemical vapor protection**

Tri-City Herald

May 31, 2016

[LINK](#)

The Department of Energy Office of Inspector General has started a review of DOE's actions to address concerns about exposure to chemical vapors at the Hanford tank farms.

Investigators met Tuesday with DOE Hanford officials to discuss the scope of the review and any matters Hanford officials wanted to discuss. Fieldwork by investigators is planned to start June 6, according to a memo from the DOE Office of Inspector General to DOE environmental cleanup officials.

“This is a good step toward providing the workers at Hanford with some assurance that someone is looking out for their safety,” said Ron Wyden, D-Ore., in a statement. He made public the Office of Inspector General memo on Tuesday.

This spring about 50 Hanford workers have received medical evaluations for possible exposure to chemical vapors. Some had respiratory symptoms, some smelled a suspicious odor and others were checked because they were in the vicinity when vapors were suspected.

Workers are concerned that exposure to chemical vapors from Hanford waste stored in underground tanks could put them at risk for serious health problems long term.

### **Funding for MOX plant caught in congressional LGBT rights fight**

Augusta Chronicle

May 31, 2016

[LINK](#)

The funding for the mixed-oxide fuel plant at Savannah River Site remains up in the air this week while Congress is on its Memorial Day recess and House leaders devise a plan for avoiding the combination of factors that wrecked the legislation last week.

Funding for MOX was part of the annual energy and water appropriations bill that was defeated Thursday in the House, rare for the 12 required yearly appropriations bills. Ironically, Augusta’s own representative might have played a role.

On the morning of the vote, Rep. Rick Allen, R-Ga., was invited to read from the Bible during the brief devotional period at the start of a closed-door meeting of House Republicans. He read Romans 1:18-32 and Revelation 22:18-19, according to his press secretary, Madison Fox.

Several members grew angry and stormed out of the meeting because the passages included admonitions against homosexuality, according to several news outlets. It

followed a rancorous session the night before in which Democratic Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, the first openly gay member of New York's delegation, offered an amendment prohibiting federal contractors from discriminating against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender employees.

Maloney's amendment had enough votes to pass when time expired, but Rep. Doug Collins, R-Ga., held the period open while members of the House leadership convinced enough Republicans to change their votes to "no" to defeat the amendment. Maloney and his allies' cries of "shame" made national news.

"Rep. Allen made no mention of the Maloney Amendment, the overall bill, or members who voted for it," Fox said.

Nevertheless, when the energy and water bill came before the House, Maloney again offered his amendment, which passed with Republican votes. However, Republicans also added provisions in unrecorded voice votes to block the Obama administration from withholding funds from North Carolina over its controversial transgender bathroom law.

When it was time for a vote on the amended bill, the Democrats all opposed it, as did enough Republicans to defeat it.

"I offered my amendment today – through an open process – to give my colleagues a second chance to do the right thing and stand against discrimination," Maloney said.

He told reporters he objected to the bill's North Carolina amendment.

Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan blamed the Democrats for playing politics.

"What we learned today is that the Democrats were not looking to advance an issue but to sabotage the appropriations process," he said. "The mere fact that they passed their amendment, then voted against the bill containing their amendment, proves this point."

For his part, Allen wanted to see the MOX funding pass as it had in committee when the bill was being assembled.

“He would have supported the committee-passed legislation to appropriate the funding, but the left hijacked the bill for political purposes and, to Rep. Allen, the Maloney Amendment was a poison pill for the bill,” Fox said.

Ryan said he will bring the funding bill up for another vote at some point. Congressional aides say it’s too early to predict when or how.

If it doesn’t pass, funding for the Department of Energy, the MOX project and other agencies covered by the energy and water bill would become subject to a continuing resolution that merely extends the current year’s funding.

A continuing resolution would actually be a victory for supporters of the MOX project because it would nullify the Senate version of the energy and water bill that reduced funding for it.

### **DOE plans to move employees out of Richland Federal Building**

Tri-City Herald

May 31, 2016

[LINK](#)

The Department of Energy is planning to start moving its employees from the government-owned Federal Building to privately owned buildings on Stevens Center Place in north Richland.

DOE has had employees at the Federal Building across Jadwin Avenue from John Dam Plaza since the building opened 50 years ago.

About 250 to 300 employees of the DOE Richland Operations Office and some contracted employees that support them now work in the Federal Building.

In 1998 Congress split DOE's work at Hanford into two offices, and employees of the second office, the Office of River Protection, are based at a building in the Stevens Center complex.

Richland Operations Office employees were told of the plans at a staff meeting Tuesday morning, and Doug Shoop, the deputy manager of the Richland Operations Office, followed up with a memo later in the day.

He said that the Richland Operations Office would begin relocating its offices to the 2420 Building in the Stevens Center business complex this summer. The building is used for employees of Hanford contractor CH2M Hill Plateau Remediation Co.

Some Richland Operations Office employees also will relocate to the 2430 Building, which is used by another Hanford contractor, Mission Support Alliance. Some Office of River Protection employees also will move to the 2430 Building to work with Richland Operations Office employees working on new contracts as major contracts for both offices near expiration.

\$3,000 estimate per federal employee of a similar move considered in 2010The Richland Operations Office move should improve communications, coordination and collaboration between the two DOE Hanford offices, Shoop said in the memo. It also could improve sharing of resources.

Much of the environmental cleanup work along the Columbia River has been completed and the Richland Operations Office is expected to turn more of its attention to central Hanford cleanup, where the Office of River Protection's work also is focused.

Co-location of the offices will better support long-term work by both offices in central Hanford, Shoop said.

In some cases, the offices may have people with expertise that is useful to work done by the other office, such as nuclear safety expertise, according to DOE officials.

The offices already have a joint chief financial officer and share some legal, security and infrastructure employees.

Moving the two offices into the same area does not mean the offices are being recombined into a single office, Shoop said.

Because there are two distinct Hanford offices with different environmental cleanup assignments, Congress considers budgets for each Hanford office separately. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., and others have argued that because they are separate offices, a budget increase for one office should not be offset with a cut for the other.

WE ARE WORKING CLOSELY WITH OUR FEDERAL UNION AND HAVE CREATED AN EMPLOYEE-LED TEAM THAT IS DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND SCHEDULE FOR THE CO-LOCATION.

Doug Shoop, Richland Operations Office deputy manager

Federal legislation that turned work to manage 56 million gallons of radioactive waste held in underground tanks and the vitrification plant being built to treat the waste over to the Office of River Protection expires in 2019. However, the legislation has been extended before.

No cost estimates for the move were released Tuesday. However, when DOE considered moving employees out of the Federal Building in 2010 it estimated the cost could be about \$3,000 per federal employee, with additional costs for contractors that would need to vacate offices to make way for federal employees. The proposal was dropped then.

Now an employee committee has been formed to help work out the details of the planned move and the schedule, which DOE expects to share with employees soon.

“We are working closely with our federal union,” Shoop said.

Some employees of the Stevens Center buildings the Richland Operations Office plans to use likely would have to move out of their offices. Although details of where

they would move were not available Tuesday, it is possible that some could move into the Federal Building.

There also will be space available in the building near Stevens Center now used by DOE contractor Washington Closure Hanford on Fermi Avenue. Its contract expires at the end of September and CH2M Hill is expected to pick up some projects that have not been completed and take over operation of the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility, the huge lined landfill in central Hanford.

The Richland Operations Office has been paying for remodeling of the portion of the Federal Building it occupies.

Remodeling, currently being done on the fourth floor, has been halted pending the planned move out of the building.

#### **PGDP Cleanup Crews Recycle Oil, Save Project \$500k**

WKMS.Org

June 1, 2016

[LINK](#)

Contractors working on cleanup of the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant have saved more than half a million dollars in project costs by recycling oil waste.

The former USEC plant enriched uranium for more than half a century before halting production in 2013.

The U.S. Department of Energy say that Fluor clean-up services have been removing hundreds of thousands of gallons of lubricating oil from uranium enrichment process buildings.

More than 265,000 gallons had to be removed from large tanks and thousands of miles of pipes inside the building. Instead of immediate disposal, almost half of the

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drained oil was reused as a rinsing agent for electrical transformers – a move that is expected to save \$500,000.

The oil was later shipped to Texas in 53 tanker truckloads.

Paducah Deactivation Project Manager Bob Smith says crews have removed a potential fire hazard and having reached an important step towards demolition.

The former USEC plant enriched uranium for more than half a century before halting production in 2013.

### **Klotz to visit Y-12 later this week**

Knox Blogs

May 31, 2016

[LINK](#)

NNSA Administrator Frank G. Klotz will reportedly pay a visit to the Y-12 nuclear weapons plant later this week, arriving Thursday in time for an all-hands meeting and then engaging in unspecified activities on Friday. No word on any special reasons for the visit. Klotz, a retired Air Force lieutenant general who served as commander of the Global Strike Command, was confirmed as head of the National Nuclear Security Administration in April 2014.

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