



# Niagara Falls Storage Site, New York

## FACT SHEET

*This fact sheet provides information about the Niagara Falls Storage Site, New York. This site is currently managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers but will eventually transfer to the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management.*

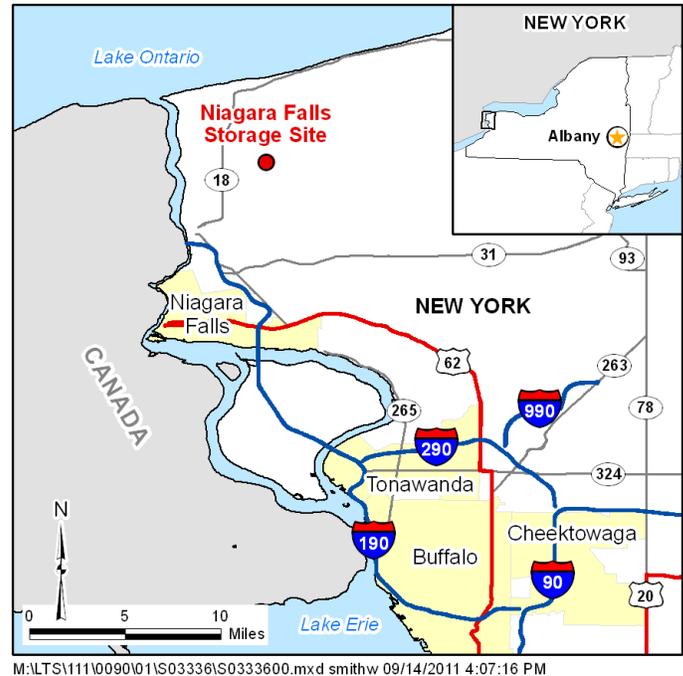
### Site Description and History

The Niagara Falls Storage Site, New York, is a 191-acre site located on Pletcher Road in the towns of Lewiston and Porter, Niagara County, in northwestern New York. It is approximately 10 miles north of the city of Niagara Falls and 19 miles northwest of Buffalo, New York. The site is a remnant of the U.S. Army's 7,500-acre Lake Ontario Ordnance Works. The property includes a 10-acre interim waste containment structure (IWCS) for radioactive waste and residues, which is covered by an interim cap designed to retard radon emissions and rainwater infiltration, and three buildings: Building 401, which contains isolated areas of fixed, low-level radioactive contamination, and two maintenance buildings.

In 1944, during World War II, the Manhattan Engineer District (MED) used the site for the storage and transshipment of radioactive residues and wastes from the processing of uranium ore. By 1948, the War Assets Administration had transferred or sold 6,000 acres of the original property, and the remaining 1,500 acres were subsequently given to the newly formed Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). From 1955 to 1975, more than 1,300 acres were transferred or sold to private concerns, leaving the current 191 acres that are owned by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

In 1943, Building 401 was used as the powerhouse for the trinitrotoluene (TNT) plant at the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works; operations involving the manufacture of TNT only continued for 1 year. The building was used to manufacture boron-10, which is not radioactive, from 1953 to 1959 and from 1965 to 1971.

In 1952, drums containing radioactive uranium ore processing residues (K-65) were stored in a silo, which has since been demolished. In the 1980s, DOE placed the residues in the engineered IWCS, which was completed in 1991. DOE began cleanup of the radioactive wastes in 1982 under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP), and as of March 2004, DOE and USACE had consolidated approximately 235,000 cubic yards of contaminated



*Location of the Niagara Falls Storage Site, New York*

material and 25,000 cubic yards of radioactive residues (of which approximately 4,000 cubic yards comprise K-65 high activity residues) into the IWCS. Although radiological contamination of soil exists throughout the site, it is at levels considerably below those of the materials stored in the IWCS. The primary contaminants of concern at the site are radium, thorium, and smaller amounts of uranium.

### Regulatory Setting

AEC, a predecessor agency to DOE, established FUSRAP in March 1974 to evaluate radioactive contamination at sites where work was performed to develop the nation's nuclear weapons and early atomic energy program. After reviewing records and radiological surveys for more than 600 sites connected with the nuclear weapons program, DOE identified 46 sites that required cleanup, including the Niagara Falls Storage Site. Congress transferred responsibility for FUSRAP

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site characterization and remediation to USACE in 1997. DOE retains responsibility for long-term surveillance and maintenance of remediated FUSRAP sites.

The Niagara Falls Storage Site is being addressed under the processes defined in the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). USACE completed a remedial investigation of the site in fall 2007 to determine the nature and extent of contamination. In response to comments received from the public on the Remedial Investigation Report, USACE performed additional sampling to develop an addendum to the report; the addendum was released in April 2011. USACE is currently working on a feasibility study to develop and evaluate alternatives to address the contamination. Final remedy selection will follow.

## Current Site Conditions

USACE is responsible for all remediation activities. The Niagara Falls Storage Site is routinely evaluated with chemical and radiation sampling, and the site continues to be maintained with emphasis on ensuring that the IWCS cap is free from cracks and functioning properly. Building 402 was decommissioned and removed as part of the site closure by USACE in 2010.

Site closure is pending, and long-term surveillance and maintenance requirements will be determined once final site conditions are known. Upon completion of remedial action, responsibility for the Niagara Falls Site will transfer from USACE to the DOE Office of Legacy Management (LM).

## Additional Information

Documents related to the Niagara Falls Storage Site and links to additional information about the site are available at <http://www.lrb.usace.army.mil/fusrap/nfss/index.htm> and <http://www.lm.doe.gov/niagara/storage/Sites.aspx>.

For more information about LM's activities at the Niagara Falls Storage Site, contact

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(970) 248-6070 (monitored continuously), or  
(877) 695-5322 (toll-free)