



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

INFORMATION ON WASTE DISPOSAL SITES

There are 20 disposal facilities for low-level wastes in the United States. Of these, 14 are operated by the Department of Energy for Department of Energy-funded programs and six are commercial, although three are no longer in operation (see the attached map). Below is additional information on the six commercial sites.

Under a provision of the Atomic Energy Act enabling qualified states to assume certain regulatory responsibilities from the NRC, all commercial low-level waste disposal sites, except one in Sheffield, Illinois, are licensed by "Agreement States," and the Sheffield site is no longer accepting waste. Of the five state-regulated sites--West Valley, New York; Maxey Flats, Kentucky; Beatty, Nevada; Barnwell, South Carolina; and the Hanford facility near Richland, Washington--only the Hanford, Barnwell, and Beatty sites are still in operation. Pursuant to existing law, NRC continues to regulate the receipt and disposal of special nuclear material (SNM) at the Barnwell and Hanford sites.

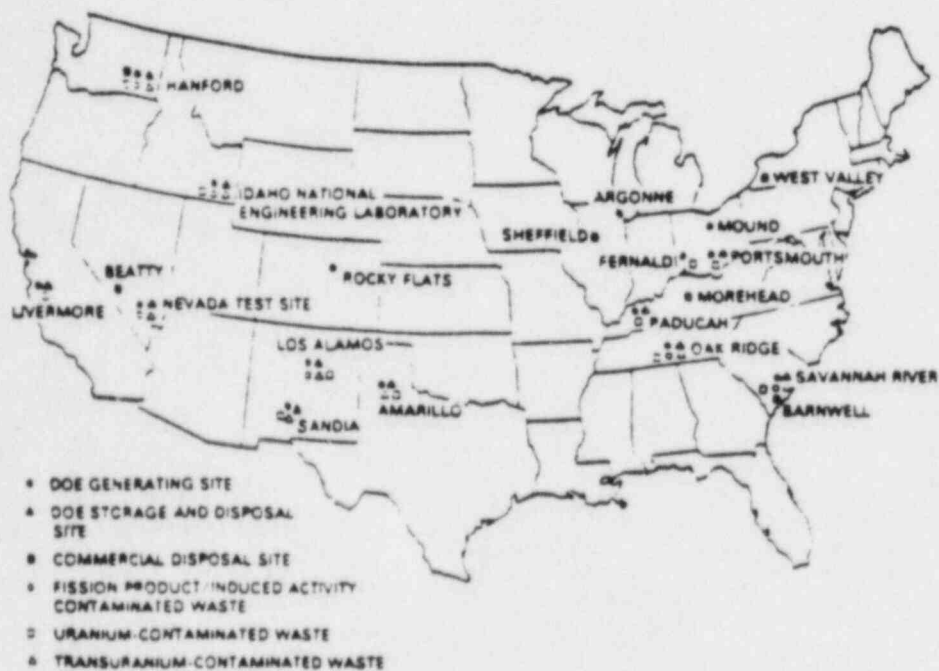
The disposal of commercial low-level radioactive waste is now a state rather than a Federal responsibility, as established by the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Act of 1980. States are currently working to develop regional compacts to assure adequate disposal capacity without building sites in every state.

To date, NRC has not licensed any high-level waste disposal sites. The Department of Energy (DOE) has the responsibility for selecting and developing a disposal technology, and constructing, operating, and decommissioning a disposal facility under NRC license, although wastes used for or part of research and development activities would generally not fall under NRC regulation.

For further information concerning DOE's programs in the high-level waste area, we suggest you contact Mr. Ben C. Rusche, Director, Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste, U.S. Department of Energy, Forrestal Building, Washington, DC 20585. For more information in the low-level waste area, we suggest you contact Mr. Jeffrey Smiley, Low-Level Waste Program Manager, Division of Storage and Treatment Projects, Office of Terminal Waste Disposal and Remedial Action, U.S. Department of Energy, Washington, DC 20545.

Docket Control Center  
Division of Waste Management

Enclosure: Map



Generating, storage, and disposal sites for solid low-level radioactive waste. (From *The Shallow Land Burial of Low-Level Radioactively Contaminated Solid Waste*. National Academy of Sciences, 1979.)