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## Meeting is set for tonight on Hematite soil removal

By Tim Rowden  
Of the Post-Dispatch  
Thursday, Jan. 06 2005

### How to participate

**Meet:** 7 tonight at the First Christian Church of Hematite on Highway P.

**Write:** Send comments by 5 p.m. Jan. 18 to Westinghouse at 3300 State Road P, Festus, MO, 63028, or e-mail [kevin.r.hayes@us.westinghouse.com](mailto:kevin.r.hayes@us.westinghouse.com).

**Call:** Kevin Hayes, environmental manager for Westinghouse at 314-810-3364.

*Meeting on Hematite  
is set for tonight*

Westinghouse Electric Co. officials will host a meeting tonight to solicit public comment about plans to remove 1,100 cubic yards of uranium-contaminated soil from the grounds of the company's shuttered nuclear fuel plant in Hematite, as part of a planned decommissioning of the facility.

The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. at the First Christian Church of Hematite on Highway P.

Kevin Hayes, an environmental manager for Westinghouse, says company officials and state and federal regulators also will discuss a planned amendment to the Westinghouse license to allow for the removal of equipment and demolition of buildings contaminated with radiation at the plant site.

"Clearly, we want to make that stuff go away," Hayes said. "We've got the license we need to remove the equipment but not the buildings."

Representatives from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, state Department of Natural Resources, state Department of Health and Senior Services, Jefferson County Health Department and Westinghouse will be available to answer questions.

Contractors for Westinghouse have begun packaging soil from the contaminated mound known as Deul's Mountain and storing the soil on site, pending final approval of the disposal plan.

Westinghouse acquired the Hematite plant in 2000 and closed it in 2001 to consolidate operations in South Carolina. The company has been working with state and federal regulators since then to develop a plan to clean up the property and decommission the facility.

Hayes says removing the mound will enable engineering crews to study the contents of waste burial pits on the plant site.

Mallinckrodt Chemical Co. opened the plant in 1956 and used it to fill military contracts. The plant later was used to manufacture nuclear fuel-rod assemblies for commercial power plants.

Hayes says identifying the contents of the burial pits is considered key to the clean-up effort.

Tests in 2002 near the shuttered plant on Highway P turned up eight wells contaminated with the chemicals trichloroethylene and tetrachloroethylene. Westinghouse paid to cap private wells and connect nearby residents to public water service to contain the contamination.

The chemicals were used as cleaning agents at the plant in the 1950s and 1960s and have been linked to cancer and other health problems.

Officials with Westinghouse believe that the chemicals may have come from one of 39 documented, unlined waste-burial pits on the plant site, or from one of two unlined evaporation ponds behind the plant.

Both practices were common in the early years of the plant's operation.

If state and federal regulators approve the plan, Hayes said, the contaminated soil will be moved off-site for disposal, as will debris from the contaminated buildings.

Meanwhile, Hayes says, Westinghouse is working with regulators to finalize a remedial investigation and feasibility study for the cleanup of the rest of the property, including the burial pits, evaporation ponds and contaminants found beneath the foundations of the buildings.

Copies of the soil and debris removal plans are available for review at the Festus Public Library.

Hayes says Westinghouse will accept public comments on the plans until 5 p.m. Jan. 18 at 3300 State Road P, Festus, Mo. 63028. Hayes can also be reached by phone at 314-810-3364, or by e-mail at [kevin.r.hayes@us.westinghouse.com](mailto:kevin.r.hayes@us.westinghouse.com).

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