

WM 2016 Conference Panel Report

PANEL SESSION 16: Hot Topics and Emerging Issues in US Commercial LLRW Management and Disposal

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Panel Reporter: **Todd D. Lovinger, Esq.**, *LLW Forum, Inc.*

Panelists:

1. **Charles Maguire**, *Director of the Radioactive Materials Division, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)*
2. **Lisa Edwards**, *Senior Program Manager, Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI)*
3. **Gregory Suber**, *Chief of the Low-Level Waste Branch, US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)*
4. **Dan Shrum**, *Senior Vice-President of Regulatory Compliance, EnergySolutions*
5. **John McCormick**, *Vice-President, Bionomics, Inc.*

Approximately 75 people attended this panel session, which focused on new developments in the field of commercial low-level radioactive waste management and disposal in the United States.

The session opened with five panelists presenting up to date information on various topics including the proposal to license a disposal cell for Greater-than-Class C (GTCC), GTCC-like and Transuranic waste through means other than deep geologic disposal at the Waste Control Specialists LLC (WCS) facility in Texas; an initiative to develop implementation guidance for the Branch Technical Position on Concentration Averaging and Encapsulation (CA BTP); status of the proposed rule to amend 10 CFR Part 61, *Licensing Requirements for Land Disposal of Radioactive Waste*; the depleted uranium performance assessment, license and permit updates, and current waste disposal volumes and types at the Clive facility in Utah; and, broker and processor perspectives on the management and disposition of disused sources.

This was followed by a question and answer session which included questions on whether any changes to federal regulations would be required to allow Texas to license a disposal facility for GTCC, GTCC-like and Transuranic wastes; is there sufficient public will to implement formal regulations on the disposal of low-activity waste; and, how should GTCC waste be addressed when considering revisions to the waste classification tables.

Summary of Presentations

Charles Maguire summarized an inquiry from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission regarding the state's ability to license a disposal cell for Greater-than-Class C (GTCC), GTCC-like and Transuranic waste through means other than deep geologic disposal at the Waste Control Specialists LLC (WCS) facility in Texas.

Lisa Edwards discussed an initiative to develop implementation guidance for the Branch Technical Position on Concentration Averaging and Encapsulation (CA BTP) that is being coordinated by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), state and federal officials, waste

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disposal facility operators and other interested stakeholders and is expected to be completed and published later this spring.

Gregory Suber gave an overview and update regarding various US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) initiatives including the status of the proposed rule to amend 10 CFR Part 61, *Licensing Requirements for Land Disposal of Radioactive Waste*, the byproduct material financial scoping study and the strategic assessment for the agency's low-level radioactive waste program.

Dan Shrum outlined recent activities and efforts by *EnergySolutions* including the depleted uranium performance assessment, license and permit updates, and current waste disposal volumes and types at the Clive facility in Utah.

John McCormick gave an overview regarding broker and processor perspectives on the management and disposition of disused sources, including outlining various proposals that were discussed at the fall 2015 meeting of the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Forum (LLW Forum) in Chicago, Illinois.

Question and Answer

Charles Maguire responded to an inquiry as to whether or not the State of Texas has considered the impacts of current federal regulations requiring geologic disposal of high-level radioactive waste on TCEQ's inquiry regarding its ability to license a disposal facility for GTCC, GTCC-like and Transuranic wastes.

Lisa Edwards was asked about implementation of the CA BTP and to clarify her message regarding how NRC should address the handling of very low-level radioactive waste. In addition, a commenter noted that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has previously sought public comment on this issue.

Dan Shrum was asked whether or not he believes that some GTCC should be classified as high-level radioactive waste.