

Feds to unveil cleanup plan for nuke waste dump

30 September 2014, by Susan Montoya Bryan

After nearly eight months, the U.S. Department of Energy has formalized a plan for cleaning up the federal government's troubled nuclear waste dump in southeastern New Mexico.

The department is scheduled to release details of the plan Tuesday afternoon. It will outline what needs to be done to decontaminate the underground facility so operations can resume.

Shipments of plutonium-contaminated waste from federal installations around the country have been on hold since February. That's when a truck fire and an unrelated release of radiation several days later forced the closure of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant.

The plant is the government's only permanent repository for waste such as contaminated gloves, tools and clothing from decades of nuclear bomb building.

Officials say it could take up to three years to reopen the multibillion-dollar site.

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