

D.E.P. Forum: Radioactive Waste

By JONATHAN TURNER

WATERBURY—A handful of Litchfield County residents went to Waterbury's City Hall last week to comment on the state Department of Environmental Protection's proposed regulations governing the disposal and storage of the state's low-level radioactive waste.

At the first of three public hearings the D.E.P. held last week on the proposed regulations, residents expressed concern about the safety of a proposed low-level radioactive waste disposal facility, how that waste could be stored for an extended period of time and whether or not the facility would accept low-level waste from other states.

"How will the site actually be managed? How is the contractor picked? Is there public input allowed in the selection?" asked Gary Pontelandolfo of Norfolk, a member of the Housatonic Greens environmental group. "Also, once the site is closed, I'm not convinced that we can devise a method to hold the waste for three to five hundred years," he said.

Charlene LaVoie, the community lawyer for Windsor, said that 67 percent of the volume of low-level radioactive waste in the state comes from the nuclear power industry.

"They're a private industry, they've made money off it. They should have to maintain it on site," she said. "Why are people being asked to deal with the hazards and the cost of it?"