

niques used to contain the waste will be different, too. Instead of the simple earthen trenches used before, Connecticut is leaning toward some sort of concrete vault, either above or below ground.

But no one knows for sure how effectively the structure will contain the waste. "Sure, the Romans could build roads that lasted 500 years, and the Egyptians could build pyramids, but no one has ever had to deal with this before," says Joel Gordes, the former state representative from Colebrook.

What other choice does the state have? Not much. Anti-nuclear advocates say we should shut down all the power plants. But even if we do, at least 2.1 million cubic feet of waste would still be generated when the plants get decommissioned. Others say "Sue the Feds," as New York and Michigan have done; they argue that it should not be the state's responsibility to get rid of low-level waste. Most people, including those in Connecticut's attorney general's office, think those suits have little chance of success and

would be just an expensive waste of time. Then again, the state could just stall, as New Hampshire and Vermont have done, and take the financial risk. However, unlike Connecticut, those states produce negligible amounts of low-level waste, and so face a much smaller risk than we would.

"It looks like someplace will just have to bite the bullet," says Newtown's Fred Hurley, "and live with the fact that they are going to have a 250-acre black hole in their town for the rest of eternity." ■