

Western Waste 2017 Licence Renewal

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When does the site licence expire?

A: The WWMF licence needs to be renewed by May 31, 2017. OPG will be requesting a ten year licence to May 31, 2027.

Q: Why worry about this now if the licence is quite a ways away?

A: In this licence renewal we will be seeking approval from the CNSC to increase the number of buildings needed for continued operations. The licence application will include future business needs for continued interim storage and processing of waste at the site during the licence period.

CNSC approval is required to determine the level of environmental review required by OPG. We will need time to undertake the work prior to the licence hearing so it is important to begin the process early.

Q: What has currently been approved from previous Environmental Assessments (EAs)?

A: Previous EAs include:

- Bruce Used Fuel Dry Storage Project EA (1997)
- Expansion of Bruce Radioactive Waste Operations Site 2 (RWOS2, now named Western Waste Management Facility) for additional Low & Intermediate Level Waste Environmental Assessment (2000)
- Low Level Storage Buildings 9-10-11 EA (2004)
- Refurbishment Waste Storage EA (2005)

OPG currently has Environmental Assessment approval, to build seven more Low & Intermediate Level Waste Storage Buildings for the storage of low level waste, Steam Generators or refurbishment waste and additional in-ground storage containers.

We are seeking environmental approval for four additional Used Fuel Dry Storage Buildings (UFDSB), four additional Low & Intermediate Level Waste (L&ILW) storage buildings, a Large Object Processing Building and a Waste Sorting Building. There is not sufficient land space in the current licensed area to accommodate these new buildings - therefore a larger licensed area is required.

Q: Why does an EA under Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) not likely apply?

A: This project is not listed in the *Regulations Designating Physical Activities*, under CEAA:

- Section 34 does not apply as this facility does not process, separate or manufacture radioactive isotopes.
- Section 37 does not apply as this is an expansion of an existing facility, not construction of a new facility.
- Section 38 does not apply as this is the expansion of a facility for interim storage, not long-term management or disposal of irradiated fuel or nuclear waste.

Q: If an EA under CEAA does not apply – then what environmental controls or oversight are being considered to be sure there is no impact?

A: CNSC approval is required under Nuclear Safety Control Act (NSCA). If CEAA does not apply, the responsibility falls to the CNSC to determine the level of environmental review required. The licence application will require evidence to confirm that adequate provisions are made for the protection of the environment. OPG believes all expansion activities can be properly addressed through the licensing process.

In order to meet the requirements of the NSCA, OPG is preparing an Environmental Risk Assessment (ERA) and a Predictive Effects Assessment (PEA). The ERA characterizes potential risks of the current operations on humans and non-human biota in accordance with Canadian Standards Association (CSA) N288.6-12. A Predictive Effects Assessment, essentially a predictive ERA is being prepared to determine the effects of site preparation, construction, operation and maintenance of the additional buildings on the environment, and any monitoring and/or mitigation that may be required to minimize environmental effects.

Q: Will there be an environmental impact?

A: The site is well characterized from four previous Environmental Assessments. There have been extensive monitoring programs and follow-up studies on soil, water, vegetation, terrestrial and habitat and archeological investigations at the WWMF.

Although there will be some environmental impacts due to the expansion of facilities, these impacts will not be significant. OPG will be working closely with regulators to mitigate potential impacts.

OPG continues to safely manage, process and store nuclear waste at the WWMF, meeting all environmental and regulatory requirements and will continue to do so under any future licences.

Q: Are these decisions not premature given some buildings are not likely required until beyond 2027?

A: The WWMF has been developed in stages since 1974 to accommodate wastes produced during reactor operations and maintenance to manage Ontario's nuclear power reactors, and will continue to function in this manner. While the long-term management options continue to be assessed, OPG wishes to ensure the WWMF continues to operate and support the on-going operations of Ontario's nuclear facilities.

Some future building requirements (beyond 2027) may need to be started in the next licence period given the long lead times and construction activities involved.

The license application will need to include possible future business needs for continued interim storage and processing of waste at the site. These are not confirmed business decisions but provide future options if needed.

Q: Why is more space needed?

A: The increase in size will not alter the basic purpose and activities associated with the WWMF. The additional storage and increased processing capability at WWMF will enable the nuclear generating stations in Ontario to continue operating as planned under their current respective operating licences. Except for the Large Object Processing Building and Waste Sorting Facility, no significant changes are anticipated in the designs that have been previously approved for similar buildings and structures on-site. This is to ensure continued business as usual to maintain ongoing operations.

Given the delays and uncertainty with the proposed L&ILW Deep Geological Repository (DGR) at the Bruce Site; approval for Darlington and Bruce Power Refurbishment projects; and the need for continued storage of Used Fuel Dry Storage Containers (DSC's) prior to a Used Fuel Repository, the Licence application will need to include possible future business needs for continued interim storage and processing of waste at the site.

Q: What else does the licence include in terms of future business at site?

A: It will provides the ability to better retrieve, re-sort and re-package L&ILW and for enhanced processing of L&ILW and/or diversion of L&ILW to conventional disposal.

This will help reduce our existing and future environmental footprint.

Again no decisions have been made. This is prudent future business planning to ensure safe continued operations. The nature of our operations is not changing.