

What is “Greater than Class-C” waste?

### ***Greater than Class C waste***

“Greater than Class C” waste is the most hazardous form of low-level waste (LLW). Greater than Class C wastes consists of activated metals, sealed sources, and contaminated trash. The radionuclides in these wastes are primarily cesium-137 and americium-241.

Low-level waste classes A, B, and C are based on the concentrations of the radionuclides in two tables in 10 CFR 61.55. See the tables at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's website: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/cfr/part061/part061-0055.html>

Class A waste has the least hazard. The risk from Class A waste should be gone in 100 years. Class B waste should be largely harmless after about 300 years. Class C is still more hazardous, and remains hazardous for 500 years. Greater than Class C exceeds all of these standards. It is not officially high-level waste but it has high levels of radioactivity. And it remains hazardous for more than 500 years.

Class A, B, and C LLW can be disposed of in near-surface facilities. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission requires that Greater than Class C waste be disposed of in a NRC-licensed geologic repository (unless NRC grants an exception).

### ***Low-level waste***

LLW is defined not by what it is, but by what it is not. LLW results from almost any activity involving radioactive materials. LLW does not come from nuclear fuel processing, but is the residual product of high-level waste. LLW are radioactive wastes that are *not* irradiated fuel, high-level, transuranic, uranium mill tailings or byproduct material. This waste comes from facilities that process, create, or otherwise handle radioactive materials, perform chemical conversions or separations, and fabricate nuclear components.