

Belarus: Facility 97045

LOCATION: 2km from Sosny, Minsk Oblast

[Irina Matyas, "Medlenny Chernobyl," *Belorusskaya gazeta* online edition, <http://www.solo.by/bg-weekly/2000/22/tema/tema.htm>, No. 22, 12 June 2000.]

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["European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR): Competent authorities for the purpose of the application of ADR including for the application of marginals 2010 (Annex A) and 10602 (Annex B) and 220900 (Annex B) and competent authorities for the carriage of dangerous goods by road in countries which are not contracting Parties to ADR," United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Web Site, <http://www.unece.org/trans/danger/comp.htm>, 2 August 2000.] {Entered by IPZ on 8/31/00}

SUBORDINATION:

The state-owned special enterprise Ekorez operates the facility.[1] Ekorez is subordinate to the Minsk City Executive Committee (Mingorispolkom), although radioactive waste management at the facility is administered on the federal level.[2]

Sources:

[1] BTK Television, 11 June 2000; in "Belarusian TV Raises Alarm on Radioactive Waste Storage Near Minsk," FBIS Document CEP20000613000143.

[2] Irina Matyas, "Medlenny Chernobyl," *Belorusskaya gazeta* online edition, <http://www.solo.by/bg-weekly/2000/22/tema/tema.htm>, No. 22, 12 June 2000.

ADMINISTRATION:

Director: Viktor B. Ivanov

[Irina Matyas, "Medlenny Chernobyl," *Belorusskaya gazeta* online edition, <http://www.solo.by/bg-weekly/2000/22/tema/tema.htm>, No. 22, 12 June 2000.] {Entered by IPZ on 8/31/00}

ACTIVITIES:

Facility 97045 is the only facility that collects, stores, and disposes of radioactive waste in Belarus. Facility 97045 was designed along the same lines as Russia's [Radon](#) facilities. It is equipped with two 1660 cubic meter concrete vaults for the disposal of solid waste and with four repositories for the disposal of spent industrial radiation sources.[1] The facility was designed to store and dispose of industrial, scientific, and medical radioactive waste. Until 1977 waste was buried in sealed, reinforced concrete trenches. The state-owned special enterprise Ekorez took charge of the facility in 1989.[2] In 1991 the facility accepted spent fuel that was extracted from the [Pamir](#) mobile nuclear power reactor.[2,3] [Promatomnadzor](#) worked with the IAEA to develop a technical cooperation project entitled "Rehabilitation of Ekorez Radioactive Waste Disposal Facility." The project, approved in 1997, was to supply Facility 97045 with modern technology and equipment for disposing and compacting waste, decontaminating equipment, and compiling a computerized record of materials to be disposed.[1] In March 1998, Promatomnadzor announced that the IAEA had provided \$120,000 for the reconstruction of Facility 97045 and would provide a similar amount in 1999.[4] In June 2000, facility Director Viktor Ivanov stated that the IAEA had delivered \$180,000 worth of equipment for processing and compressing waste, and encasing it in concrete.[2] Until 1992, Facility 97045 did not segregate varying types of waste and did not keep appropriate records. Since 1997, wastes containing plutonium-239, americium-241, and radium-226 have been stored separately in special containers.[1] According to a Belarusian television report on 11 June 2000, Belprampraekt Joint Stock Company has received approval for the construction of an addition to Facility 97045 that will store radioactive waste for 25 years. This development has been the center of some controversy, as the facility's proximity to the Minsk Free Economic Zone has some parties concerned that the zone's relaxed regulations might lead to the for-profit import and storage of radioactive waste.[5]

Sources:

[1] Vladimir I. Yatsevich, Larissa F. Rozdialovskaya, and Andrei A. Tukhto, "The Challenges and Issues Facing the Radioactive Waste Management in Belarus," *Proceeds from WM '97 Symposia Inc. Web Site*, <http://www.wmsym.org/wm97proceedings/sess44/44-01.htm>.

[2] Irina Matyas, "Medlenny Chernobyl," *Belorusskaya gazeta* online edition, <http://www.solo.by/bg-weekly/2000/22/tema/tema.htm>, No. 22, 12 June 2000.

[3] Vasiliy Yermashkevich, "Pryachut li v 'Sosnakh' 660 atomnykh bomb?" *Vecherniy Minsk* online edition, http://www.belarus.net/minsk_ev/98/russia/02/sosny24.htm, No. 36, 24 February 1998.

[4] "Prodolzhayetsya rekonstruktsiya mogilnika dlya zakhroneniya radioaktivnykh otkhodov pod Minskom," *OPEN.BY* online edition, <http://www.open.by/1999110305.html>, 11 March 1999.

[5] BTK Television, 11 June 2000; in "Belarusian TV Raises Alarm on Radioactive Waste Storage Near Minsk," FBIS Document CEP20000613000143. {Entered by IPZ on 8/31/00}

BACKGROUND:

The facility was opened in the early 1960s and accepted the first shipment of waste in December 1963.

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MPC&A:

In June 2000, a Minsk television reporter stated that there were no guards or warning signs around the facility, but noted that there was a new perimeter fence, which was corroborated by a *Belorusskaya gazeta* report published at approximately the same time.[1,2] According to Larissa Rozdialovskaya, an expert from the Interblast Nuclear and Radiation Safety Inspectorate, the disposal procedure at the facility does not meet

current radiation safety requirements. She stated that Facility 97045's unsorted waste poses a greater threat to public health than any future waste shipments. Leonid Khomitskiy, who is in charge of the Radiation Sanitation Department of the Minsk Center for Sanitation and Epidemiology, insists that health norms at the site are being observed, that areas with elevated background radiation levels are marked, and that his department monitors radiation levels on a daily basis.[2]

Sources:

[1] "Belarusian TV Raises Alarm on Radioactive Waste Storage Near Minsk," Minsk BTK Television, 11 June 2000, FBIS Document CEP20000613000143.

[2] Irina Matyas, "Medlenny Chernobyl," *Belorusskaya gazeta* online edition, <http://www.solo.by/bg-weekly/2000/22/tema/tema.htm>, No. 22, 12 June 2000. {Entered by IPZ on 8/31/00}

SAFETY:

In 1977 the trenches were filled to capacity and mothballed. In the same year the facility underwent reconstruction--two surface storage chambers for solid waste and four 6m deep wells for spent radiation sources were built. After the first chamber had been filled to the capacity, it was coated with asphalt to prevent contamination of the environment.[1] As of June 2000, it is estimated that the second storage chamber will be completely filled in a year and a half.[3] According to an Ekorez internal document, the reinforced concrete trenches in which waste was buried prior to 1977 are likely to degrade seriously in the near future. Facility Manager Viktor Ivanov says that as of June 2000, unsorted radioactive waste is still dumped into pits, covered with sand, then cement, then reinforced concrete slabs, and finally sealed with a water-impermeable layer. Belprampraekt has developed a plan to repair the facility's crumbling trenches. Approval by a governmental review panel is pending as of June 2000. In the meantime, Belprampraekt has been engaged in a three-stage construction project. The first stage, which included the construction of a reinforced concrete perimeter wall and repair of a garage, has been completed. The second stage entails the construction of storage and processing chambers for solid radioactive waste, and a laboratory. The construction of the storage facility has already begun. The third stage includes the construction of "an experimental thermal unit." As of 27 June 2000, no date had been set for construction to start, and the State Environmental Expert panel has yet to issue its approval.[1] Reconstruction entails modernizing radioactive waste disposal equipment at the site and making possible the extraction of the previously buried radioactive waste for sorting and conditioning.[1,2] According to [Promatomnadzor](#), once reconstruction is complete, the facility will meet all necessary international safety standards.[2] After reconstruction, waste will be sorted according to activity level and half-life, and stored for 25 years. It is unclear what will happen with the waste after that time.[1]

Sources:

[1] Natalya Miloserdova, "Mogilnik rasruchayetsya. Chto delat?" *Vecherniy Minsk* online edition, <http://www.vm.agava.ru/archive/2000/06/27/rad.htm>, No. 122, 27 June 2000.

[2] "Prodolzhayetsya rekonstruktsiya mogilnika dlya zakhroneniya radioaktivnykh otkhodov pod Minskom," OPEN.BY Web Site, <http://www.open.by//1999110305.html>, 11 March 1999.

[3] Irina Matyas, "Medlenny Chernobyl," *Belorusskaya gazeta* online edition, <http://www.solo.by/bg-weekly/2000/22/tema/tema.htm>, No. 22, 12 June 2000. {Entered by IPZ on 8/31/00}

COMMENTS:

There are plans for constructing two additional units (a storage facility and a waste processing facility) and renovating the whole facility; however, only BR10 million (approximately \$10,000 as of 27 June 2000) of the BR350 million (approximately \$360,000 as of 27 June 2000) state allocation for 2000 had been received as of June of 2000.[1] According to Nikolay Podrez, Deputy Head of the Industrial and Road Construction Department, the renovation project has not been coordinated with Promatomnadzor, Minskgrado Research and Design Institute, and the city and oblast architectural committee. Glavekspertiza (the Main Directorate for State Agency Expert Analysis under the Belarusian Ministry of Architecture) feels that Facility 97045 should be considered a facility for the processing and long-term temporary storage (20-25 years) of radioactive waste and sources of ionizing radiation, rather than a permanent waste burial site. The presence of such a facility in the vicinity of Minsk violates regulations on the safe handling of radioactive waste.[2]

Sources:

[1] Irina Matyas, "Medlenny Chernobyl," *Belorusskaya gazeta* online edition, <http://www.solo.by/bg-weekly/2000/22/tema/tema.htm>, No. 22, 12 June 2000.

[2] Natalya Miloserdova, "Mogilnik rasruchayetsya. Chto delat?" *Vecherniy Minsk* online edition, <http://www.vm.agava.ru/archive/2000/06/27/rad.htm>, No. 122, 27 June 2000.

FACILITY 97045 DEVELOPMENTS:

6/12/2000: CONCERN OVER WASTE STORAGE

In June 2000, the issue of Facility 97045's environmental safety was raised by Minsk-area environmentalists and residents of the town of Sosny. There is concern that Facility 97045 could become a waste disposal facility for Russia and other countries, thereby presenting an environmental threat and health hazard to the population. The opinions of different officials and experts on the subject of environmental safety of the facility are contradictory. Head of the Minsk Health and Safety Department Leonid Khomitskiy says that the facility poses no threat to the population of Sosny, and that the radiation safety service keeps the situation under control. Director of the Independent Institute on Radiation Safety Vasiliy Nesterenko says that the facility in its present state does pose a threat to the environment, and that there is a clear need to study the feasibility of proposed reconstruction plans before they can proceed.

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11/12/99: ALLEGATIONS REGARDING STORAGE OF WASTE ON BELARUSIAN TERRITORY

According to a 12 November 1999 report by *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, rumors are spreading about Russia's alleged intention to dispose of its nuclear waste on Belarusian territory. On 11 December 1999 Russian Deputy Head of the [Ministry of Atomic Energy](#) Department of Nuclear Science and Technology Yuriy Tkachuk gave an elusive answer when confronted with the issue during an interview.

[G.F., "Stanet li Beloryssiya musornym yashchikom dlya Rossii, dolzhen reshat narod," *Nezavisimaya gazeta* online edition, <http://news.mosinfo.ru/news/ng/99/12/data/ng121111.htm>, No. 233, 12 November 1999.]

{Entered by IPZ on 8/31/00}