GLOSSARY

A

accuracy - The degree of agreement between a measurement and its true value. The accuracy of a data set is assessed by evaluating results from standards or sample spikes containing known quantities of an analyte.

action plan - An action plan addresses assessment findings and root causes that have been identified in an audit or an assessment report. It is intended to define specific actions that the responsible group will undertake to remedy deficiencies. The plan includes a timetable and resource requirements for implementation of the planned activities.

aquifer - A water-bearing unit of permeable rock or soil that will yield water in usable quantities via wells. Confined aquifers are bounded above and below by less permeable layers. Groundwater in a confined aquifer may be under a pressure greater than the atmospheric pressure. Unconfined aquifers are bounded below by less permeable material, but are not bounded above. The pressure on the groundwater at the surface of an unconfined aquifer is equal to that of the atmosphere.

as low as reasonably achievable (ALARA) - An approach to radiation protection that advocates controlling or managing exposures (both individual and collective) to the work force and the general public and releases of radioactive material to the environment as low as social, technical, economic, practical, and public policy considerations permit. As used in United States Department of Energy (DOE) Order 5400.5, ALARA is not a dose limit but, rather, a process that has as its objective the attainment of dose levels as far below the applicable limits of the Order as practicable.

B

background radiation - Natural and man-made radiation such as cosmic radiation and radiation from naturally radioactive elements and from commercial sources and medical procedures.

becquerel (Bq) - A unit of radioactivity equal to one nuclear transformation per second.

C

categorical exclusion (CX) - A proposed action that normally does not require an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement and that the DOE has determined does not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. See 10 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1021.410.

Class A, B, and C low-level waste - Waste classifications from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's 10 CFR Part 61 rule. Maximum concentration limits are set for specific isotopes. Class A waste disposal is minimally restricted with respect to the form of the waste. Class B waste must meet more rigorous requirements to ensure physical stability after disposal. Higher concentration limits are set for the same isotopes in Class C waste (the most radioactive), which also must meet physical stability requirements. Moreover, special measures must be taken at the disposal facility to protect against inadvertent intrusion.

compliance findings - Conditions that may not satisfy applicable environmental or safety and health regulations, DOE Orders and memoranda, enforcement actions, agreements with regulatory agencies, or permit conditions.

confidence interval - The range of values within which some parameter may be expected to lie with a stated degree of confidence. For example, a value of 10 with an uncertainty of 5 calculated at the 95% confidence level (10±5) indicates there is a 95% probability that the true value of that parameter lies between 5 and 15.

consistency - The condition of showing steady conformity to practices. In the environmental monitoring program, approved procedures are in place so that data collection activities are carried out in a consistent manner to minimize variability.

Core Team - The "core team approach" is a formalized, consensus-based process in which those individuals with decision-making authority, including the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and State remedial project managers, work together to reach agreement on key remediation decisions (DOE/EH-413-9911, October 1999). In August 2006, the DOE-West Valley Demonstration Project (DOE-WVDP) requested that the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), the EPA (region 2), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) participate in a collaborative process (i.e., Core Team) to resolve technical issues associated with the "Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Decommissioning and/or Long-Term Stewardship at the West Valley Demonstration Project and Western New York Nuclear Service Center" (DEIS). The WVDP Core Team has been participating in this process since then.

cosmic radiation - High-energy subatomic particles from outer space that bombard the earth's atmosphere. Cosmic radiation is part of natural background radiation.

curie (Ci) - A unit of radioactivity equal to 37 billion (3.7×10^{10}) nuclear transformations per second.

D

data set - A group of data (e.g., factual information such as measurements or statistics) used as a basis for reasoning, discussion, or calculation.

decay (radioactive) - Disintegration of the nucleus of an unstable nuclide by spontaneous emission of charged particles and/or photons or by spontaneous fission.

derived concentration guide (DCG) - The concentration of a radionuclide in air and water that, under conditions of continuous human exposure for one year by one exposure mode (i.e., ingestion of water, inhalation, or immersion in a gaseous cloud), would result in an effective dose equivalent of 100 mrem (1 mSv). See Table UI-4 in the "Useful Information" section of this report.

detection limit or level (DL) - This term may also be expressed as "method detection limit" (MDL). The smallest amount of a substance that can be distinguished in a sample by a given measurement procedure at a given confidence level. (See *lower limit of detection*.)

dispersion (airborne) - The process whereby particulates or gases are spread and diluted in air as they move away from a source.

dispersion (groundwater) - The process whereby solutes are spread or mixed as they are transported by groundwater as it moves through the subsurface.

dosimeter - A portable device for measuring the total accumulated exposure to ionizing radiation.

downgradient - The direction of water flow from a reference point to a selected point of interest at a lower elevation than the reference point. (See *gradient.*)

E

effective dose - (See *effective dose equivalent* under *radiation dose*.)

effluent - Any treated or untreated air emission or liquid discharge to the environment.

effluent monitoring - Sampling or measuring specific liquid or gaseous effluent streams for the presence of pollutants to determine compliance with applicable standards, permit requirements, and administrative controls.

environmental assessment (EA) - An evaluation that provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether an environmental impact statement is required or a finding of no significant impact should be issued. See 10 CFR 1021.

environmental impact statement (EIS) - A detailed statement that includes the environmental impact of the proposed action, any adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided should the proposal be implemented, and alternatives to the proposed action. Detailed information may be found in Section 10 CFR 1021.

environmental management system (EMS) - The systematic application of business management practices to environmental issues, including defining the organizational structure, planning for activities, identifying responsibilities, and defining practices, procedures, processes, and resources.

environmental monitoring - The collection and analysis of samples or the direct measurement of environmental media. Environmental monitoring consists of two major activities: effluent monitoring and environmental surveillance.

environmental surveillance - The collection and analysis of samples or the direct measurement of air, water, soil, foodstuff, and biota in the environs of a facility of interest to determine compliance with applicable standards and to detect trends and environmental pollutant transport.

exposure - The subjection of a target (usually living tissue) to radiation.

F

fallout - The settling to earth of radioactive materials mixed into the earth's atmosphere.

finding - A DOE compliance term. A finding is a statement of fact concerning a condition in the Environmental, Safety, and Health program that was investigated during an appraisal. Findings include best management practice findings, compliance findings, and noteworthy practices. A finding may be a simple statement of proficiency or a description of deficiency (i.e., a variance from procedures or criteria). (See also *self-assessment*.)

fission - The act or process of splitting into parts. A nuclear reaction in which an atomic nucleus splits into fragments (i.e., fission products, usually fragments of comparable mass) with the evolution of approximately 100 million to several hundred million electron volts of energy.

G

gamma isotopic (also *gamma scan*) - An analytical method by which the quantity of several gamma ray-emitting radioactive isotopes may be determined simultaneously. Typical nuclear fuel cycle isotopes determined by this method include, but are not limited to, cobalt-60, zirconium-95, ruthenium-106, silver-110m, antimony-125, cesium-134, cesium-137, and europium-154. Naturally occurring isotopes for which samples also often are analyzed are beryllium-7, potassium-40, radium-224, and radium-226.

gradient - Change in value of one variable with respect to another variable, such as a vertical change over a horizontal distance.

groundwater - Subsurface water in the pore spaces and fractures of soil and bedrock units.

H

half-life - The time in which half the atoms of a radionuclide disintegrate into another nuclear form. The half-life may vary from a fraction of a second to billions of years.

hazardous waste - A waste or combination of wastes that because of quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics may: a) cause or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious irreversible or incapacitating reversible illness; or (b) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed of, or otherwise managed.

high-level waste (HLW) - The highly radioactive waste material that results from the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel, including liquid waste produced directly in reprocessing and solid waste derived from the liquid, that contains a combination of transuranic waste and fission products in concentrations sufficient to require permanent isolation. (See also *transuranic waste*.)

hydraulic conductivity - The ratio of flow velocity to driving force for viscous flow under saturated conditions of a specified liquid in a porous medium; the ratio describing the rate at which water can move through a permeable medium.

I

integrated safety management system (ISMS) - The ISMS describes the programs, policies, and procedures used by West Valley Environmental Services LLC (WVES) and the DOE to ensure that WVES establishes a safe workplace for the employees, the public, and the environment. The guiding principles of ISMS are line management responsibility for safety; clear roles and responsibilities; competence commensurate with responsibilities; balanced priorities; identification of safety standards and requirements; hazard controls; and operations authorization.

interim status - The status of any currently existing facility that becomes subject to the requirement to have a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permit because of a new statutory or regulatory amendment to RCRA.

ion - An atom or group of atoms with an electric charge.

ion exchange - The reversible exchange of ions contained in solution with other ions that are part of the ion-exchange material.

isotope - Different forms of the same chemical element that are distinguished by having the same number of protons but a different number of neutrons in the nucleus. An element can have many isotopes. For example, the three isotopes of hydrogen are protium, deuterium, and tritium, with one, two, and three neutrons in the nucleus, respectively.

L

land disposal restrictions (LDR) - Regulations promulgated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (and by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation [NYSDEC] in New York State) governing the land disposal of hazardous wastes. The wastes must be treated using the best demonstrated available technology or must meet certain treatment standards before being disposed.

lower limit of detection (LLD) - The lowest limit of a given parameter that an instrument is capable of detecting. A measurement of analytical sensitivity.

low-level waste (LLW) - Radioactive waste not classified as high-level waste, transuranic waste, spent fuel, or uranium mill tailings. (See *Class A, B, and C low-level waste*.)

M

maximally exposed individual (MEI) - On-site (occupational) or off-site (nonoccupational) person that receives the highest dose from a release scenario.

maximally exposed off-site individual (MEOSI) - Member of the general public receiving the highest dose from the effluent release.

mean - The average value of a series of measurements.

metric ton - (See *ton, metric*.)

millirem (mrem) - A unit of radiation dose equivalent that is equal to one one-thousandth of a rem. An individual member of the public can receive up to 100 mrem per year according to DOE standards. This limit does not include radiation received for medical treatment (approximately 65 mrem) or the roughly 295 mrem, on average, that people receive annually from background radiation.

minimum detectable concentration (MDC) or **method detection limit (MDL) -** Depending on the sample medium, the smallest amount or concentration of a radioactive or nonradioactive analyte that can be reliably detected using a specific analytical method. Calculations of the minimum detectable concentrations are based on the lower limit of detection.

mixed waste (MW) - A waste that is both radioactive and RCRA hazardous.

N

n-Dodecane/tributyl phosphate - An organic solution composed of 30% tributyl phosphate (TBP) dissolved in n-dodecane used to first separate the uranium and plutonium from the fission products in dissolved nuclear fuel and then to separate the uranium from the plutonium.

neutron - An electrically neutral subatomic particle in the baryon family with a mass 1,839 times that of an electron, stable when bound in an atomic nucleus, and having a mean lifetime of approximately 16.6 minutes as a free particle.

notice of violation (NOV) - Generally, an official notification from a regulatory agency of noncompliance with permit requirements. (An example would be a letter of notice from a regional water engineer in response to an instance of significant noncompliance with a State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System [SPDES] permit.)

nucleus - The positively-charged central region of an atom, made up of protons and neutrons and containing almost all of the mass of the atom.

O

outfall - The discharge end of a drain or pipe that carries wastewater or other liquid effluents into a ditch, pond, or river.

P

parameter - Any of a set of physical properties whose values determine the characteristics or behavior of something (e.g., temperature, pressure, density of

air). In relation to environmental monitoring, a monitoring parameter is a constituent of interest. Statistically, the term "parameter" is a calculated quantity, such as a mean or variance, that describes a statistical population.

particulates - Solid particles and liquid droplets small enough to become airborne.

person-rem - The sum of the individual radiation dose equivalents received by members of a certain group or population. It may be calculated by multiplying the average dose per person by the number of persons exposed. For example, a thousand people each exposed to one millirem would have a collective dose of one person-rem.

plume - The distribution of a pollutant in air or water after being released from a source.

practical quantitation limits (PQLs) - The PQL is the minimum concentration of an analyte that can be measured within specified limits of precision during routine laboratory operations (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 1991).

precision - The degree of reproducibility of a measurement under a given set of conditions. Precision in a data set is assessed by evaluating results from duplicate field or analytical samples.

proton - A stable, positively-charged subatomic particle in the baryon family with a mass 1,836 times that of an electron.

pseudo-monitoring point - A theoretical monitoring location rather than an actual physical location; a calculation based on analytical test results of samples obtained from other associated, tributary, monitored locations. (Point 116 at the WVDP is classified as a "pseudo" monitoring point because samples are not physically collected at that location. Rather, using analytical results from samples collected from "real" upstream outfall locations, compliance with the total dissolved solids limit in the WVDP's SPDES permit is calculated for this theoretical point.)

Q

quality factor (QF) - The extent of tissue damage caused by different types of radiation of the same energy. The greater the damage, the higher the quality factor. More specifically, the factor by which absorbed doses are multiplied to obtain a quantity that indicates the degree of biological damage produced by ionizing radiation. See *radiation dose*.) The factor is dependent upon radiation type (alpha, beta, gamma, or x-ray) and exposure (internal or external).

R

rad - Radiation absorbed dose. One hundred ergs of energy absorbed per gram of solid material.

radiation - The process of emitting energy in the form of rays or particles that are thrown off by disintegrating atoms. The rays or particles emitted may consist of alpha, beta, or gamma radiation.

***alpha radiation* -** The least penetrating type of radiation. Alpha radiation (similar to a helium nucleus) can be stopped by a sheet of paper or the outer dead layer of skin.

***beta radiation* -** Electrons emitted from a nucleus during fission and nuclear decay. Beta radiation can be stopped by an inch of wood or a thin sheet of aluminum.

***gamma radiation* -** A form of electromagnetic, high-energy radiation emitted from a nucleus. Gamma rays are essentially the same as x-rays and require heavy shielding such as lead, concrete, or steel to be stopped.

***internal radiation* -** Radiation originating from a source within the body as a result of the inhalation, ingestion, or implantation of natural or man-made radionuclides in body tissues.

radiation dose:

***absorbed dose* -** The amount of energy absorbed per unit mass in any kind of matter from any kind of ionizing radiation. Absorbed dose is measured in rads or grays.

***collective dose equivalent* -** The sum of the dose equivalents for all the individuals comprising a defined population. The per capita dose equivalent is the quotient of the collective dose equivalent divided by the population. The unit of collective dose equivalent is person-rem or person-sievert.

***collective effective dose equivalent* -** The sum of the effective dose equivalents for the individuals comprising a defined population. Units of measurement are person-rem or person-sievert. The per capita effective dose equivalent is obtained by dividing the collective dose equivalent by the population. Units of measurement are rem or sievert.

***committed dose equivalent* -** A measure of internal radiation. The predicted total dose equivalent to a tissue or organ over a fifty-year period after a known intake of a radionuclide into the body. It does not include contributions from sources of external penetrating radiation. Committed dose equivalent is measured in rem or sievert.

***committed effective dose equivalent* -** The sum of the committed dose equivalents to various tissues in the body, each multiplied by the appropriate weighting factor. Committed effective dose equivalent is measured in rem or sievert.

***total effective dose equivalent* -** The summation of the products of the dose equivalent received by specified tissues of the body and the appropriate weighting factors. It includes the dose from radiation sources internal and/or external to the body. The effective dose equivalent is expressed in units of rem or seivert.

radioactivity - A property possessed by some elements (such as uranium) whereby alpha, beta, or gamma rays are spontaneously emitted.

radioisotope - A radioactive isotope of a specified element. Carbon-14 is a radioisotope of carbon. Tritium is a radioisotope of hydrogen. (See *isotope*.)

radionuclide - A radioactive nuclide. Radionuclides are variations (isotopes) of elements. They have the same number of protons and electrons but different numbers of neutrons, resulting in different atomic masses. There are hundreds of known nuclides, both man-made and naturally occurring.

reference man - A hypothetical aggregation of human physical and physiological characteristics arrived at by international consensus. These characteristics may be used by researchers and public health workers to standardize results of experiments and to relate biological insult to a common base.

rem - An acronym for Roentgen Equivalent Man. A unit of radiation exposure that indicates the potential effect of radiation on human cells.

remote-handled waste - At the WVDP, waste that has an external surface dose rate that exceeds 100 millirem per hour or a high level of alpha and/or beta surface contamination and, therefore, must be handled in such a manner that it does not come into physical contact with workers.

roentgen - A unit of exposure to ionizing radiation. It is that quantity of gamma or x-rays required to produce ions carrying one electrostatic unit of electrical charge in one cubic centimeter of dry air under standard conditions. The unit is named after Wilhelm Roentgen, German scientist who discovered x-rays in 1895.

S

self-assessment - Appraisals of work at the WVDP by individuals, groups, or organizations responsible for overseeing and/or performing the work. Self-assessments are intended to provide an internal review of performance to determine that specific functional areas are in programmatic and site-specific compliance with applicable DOE directives, WVDP procedures, and regulations.

***finding* -** A direct and significant violation of applicable DOE, regulatory, or other procedural or programmatic requirements. A finding requires documented corrective action.

***observation* -** A condition that, while not a direct and significant violation of applicable DOE, regulatory, or other procedural or programmatic requirements, could result in a finding if not corrected. An observation requires documented corrective action.

***good practice* -** A statement of proficiency or confirmed excellence worthy of documenting.

sievert - A unit of dose equivalent from the International System of Units (Systeme Internationale). Equal to one joule per kilogram.

solid waste management unit (swmu) - Any discernible unit at which solid wastes have been placed at any time, irrespective of whether the unit was intended for the management of solid or hazardous waste. Such units include any area at a facility at which solid wastes have been routinely and system-

atically released or created. (See also *super solid waste management unit*.)

spent fuel - Nuclear fuel that has been used in a nuclear reactor; this fuel contains uranium, activation products, fission products, and plutonium.

spill - A spill or release is defined as "any spilling, leaking, pumping, pouring, emitting, emptying, discharging, injecting, escaping, leaching, dumping, or otherwise disposing of substances from the ordinary containers employed in the normal course of storage, transfer, processing, or use", outside of the intended procedural action.

stakeholder - A person or group that has an investment, share, or interest in something. At the WVDP stakeholders include Project management, scientists, other employees, politicians, regulatory agencies, local and national interest groups, and members of the general public.

standard deviation - An indication of the dispersion of a set of results around their average.

super solid waste management unit (SSWMU) - Individual solid waste management units that have been grouped and ranked into larger units – super solid waste management units – because some individual units are contiguous or so close together as to make monitoring of separate units impractical. This terminology is unique to the WVDP, and is not an official regulatory term. (See also *solid waste management unit*.)

surface water - Water that is exposed to the atmospheric conditions of temperature, pressure, and chemical composition at the surface of the earth.

surveillance - The act of monitoring or observing a process or activity to verify conformance with specified requirements.

T

thermoluminescent dosimeter (TLD) - A device that luminesces upon heating after being exposed to radiation. The amount of light emitted is proportional to the amount of radiation to which the luminescent material has been exposed.

ton, metric (also *tonne*) **-** A unit of mass equal to 1,000 kilograms. (See also Table UI-2, "Units of Measure Used in This ASER.")

ton (*short ton*) **-** A unit of weight equal to 2,000 pounds or 907.1847 kilograms. (See also Table UI-2, "Units of Measure Used in This ASER.)

transuranic (TRU) waste - Waste containing transuranic elements, that is, those elements with an atomic number greater than 92, including neptunium, plutonium, americium, and curium.

U

universal wastes - Wastes subject to special management provisions that are intended to ease the management burden and facilitate recycling of such materials. Four types of waste are currently covered under the universal waste regulations: hazardous waste batteries, hazardous waste pesticides that are either recalled or collected in waste pesticide collection programs, hazardous waste thermostats, and hazardous waste lamps.

upgradient - Referring to the flow of water or air, "upgradient" is analogous to upstream. Upgradient is a point that is "before" an area of study and that is used as a baseline for comparison with downstream or downgradient data. (See *gradient* and *downgradient*.)

V

vitrification - A waste treatment process that encapsulates or immobilizes radioactive wastes in a glassy matrix to prevent them from reacting in disposal sites. Vitrification involves adding chemicals, glass formers, and waste to a heated vessel and melting the mixture into a glass that is then poured into a canister.

W

watershed - The area contained within a drainage divide above a specified point on a stream or river.

water table - The upper surface in a body of groundwater; the surface in an unconfined aquifer or confining bed at which the pore water pressure is equal to atmospheric pressure.

X

x-ray - Penetrating electromagnetic radiations having wave lengths shorter than those of visible light. They are usually produced by bombarding a metallic target with fast electrons in a high vacuum. In nuclear

reactions it is customary to refer to photons originating in the nucleus as gamma rays and those originating in the extranuclear part of the atom as x-rays. These rays are sometimes called Roentgen rays after their discoverer, W.C. Roentgen.