nuclear watch new mexico

Transforming the U.S. Strategic Posture and Weapons Complex
For Transition to a Nuclear Weapons-Free World

Five citizen's groups, Nuclear Watch of New Mexico; the Natural Resources Defense Council; the Project On Government Oversight; Tri-Valley CAREs of Livermore, California; the Greater Kansas City Chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility; and Just Peace of Amarillo, Texas, have collaborated to form a **Nuclear Weapons Complex Consolidation Policy Network.** We advocate for a radically reduced U.S. stockpile and a shrunken nuclear weapons complex to support it.

As a matter of overriding policy, the United States should view its strategic force for one purpose and one purpose only— to deter the use of nuclear weapons by others. The Defense Department and the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) should then structure U.S. nuclear forces and the weapons complex accordingly. If our recommendations are followed, the United States will maintain a total stockpile of 500 warheads, more than adequate for deterrence, as an interim step toward global, verifiable nuclear disarmament. It follows that **a smaller weapons complex can sufficiently maintain this reduced stockpile**.

We recommend that the United States refrain from incorporating new military capabilities into existing nuclear weapons and drastically reduce nuclear weapons research and development. NNSA should adopt a "curatorship" approach toward maintaining stockpile safety and reliability by **changing existing weapons as little as possible** and only in response to documented findings that corrective actions are needed to fix a component or condition that could degrade performance or safety. Curatorship of a reduced arsenal will enable NNSA to shrink the nuclear weapons complex from eight sites across the country to only three (see map on back).
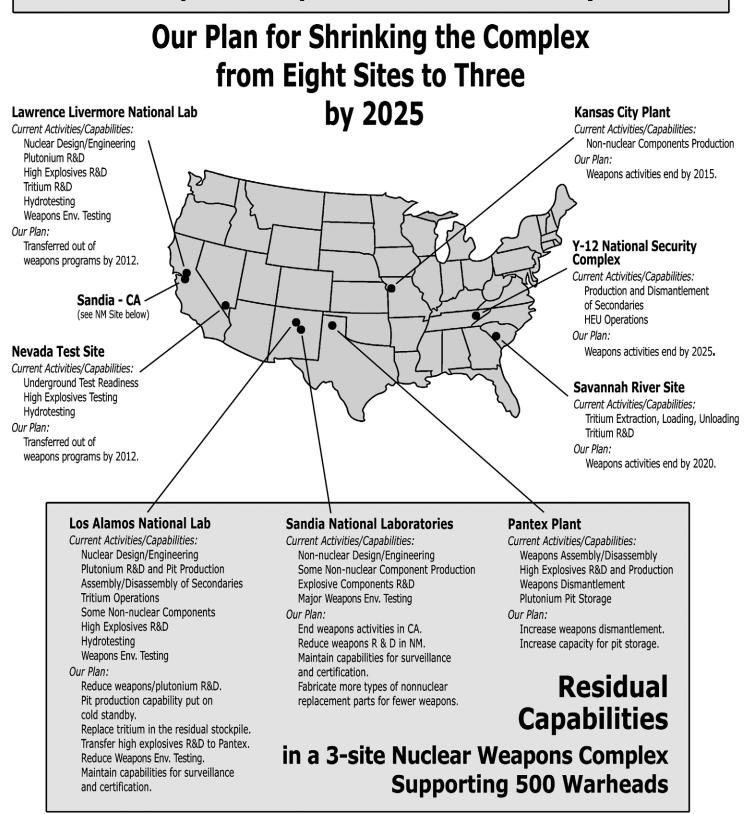
Specifically, the Lawrence Livermore Lab in California; the Nevada Test Site; the Savannah River Site near Aiken, SC; the Y-12 Plant near Oak Ridge, TN; and the Kansas City Plant should be transferred out of NNSA nuclear weapons programs. **Already existing capabilities** at the Los Alamos and Sandia Labs in New Mexico and the Pantex Plant in the Texas Panhandle can handle any necessary residual curatorship activities for the stockpile while it awaits eventual total dismantlement. Under its proposed "Complex Transformation" NNSA plans to build a plutonium "Nuclear Facility" at Los Alamos, a "Uranium Processing Facility" at Y-12, and a new Kansas City Plant. Our real transformation of the nuclear weapons complex would delete the $5 billion-plus to be spent on these new unneeded nuclear weapons production facilities.

Our radically reduced stockpile and nuclear weapons complex is meant to be an interim concrete step toward a nuclear weapons-free world. It **should result in no net increase in nuclear weapons activities or funding at any of the three remaining sites**, except for dismantlements. We are confident in the merits of our plan, but strongly emphasize that due process needs to be followed before implementation, including public review as required by the National Environmental Policy Act and any needed consultations with State and Tribal governments.

In today's economic climate taxpayers' dollars must be conserved. Our plan would cut NNSA's spending on nuclear weapons by $2.3 billion in 2010 compared to the Obama Administration's recently released 2010 budget request of $6.3 billion. By 2020 we would further cut NNSA spending on nuclear weapons to ~2 billion dollars in FY09 dollars, one-third of what it is today.

The Network's report's executive summary, full report and map of our proposed future nuclear weapons complex are available at www.nukewatch.org/policynetwork/index.htm

Nuclear Weapons Complex Consolidation Policy Network

Our Plan for Shrinking the Complex
from Eight Sites to Three
by 2025

Lawrence Livermore National Lab
Current Activities/Capabilities:
Nuclear Design/Engineering
Plutonium R&D
High Explosives R&D
Tritium R&D
Hydrotesting
Weapons Env. Testing
Our Plan:
Transferred out of
weapons programs by 2012.

Sandia - CA
(see NM Site below)

Nevada Test Site
Current Activities/Capabilities:
Underground Test Readiness
High Explosives Testing
Hydrotesting
Our Plan:
Transferred out of
weapons programs by 2012.

Kansas City Plant
Current Activities/Capabilities:
Non-nuclear Components Production
Our Plan:
Weapons activities end by 2015.

Y-12 National Security Complex
Current Activities/Capabilities:
Production and Dismantlement
of Secondaries
HEU Operations
Our Plan:
Weapons activities end by 2025.

Savannah River Site
Current Activities/Capabilities:
Tritium Extraction, Loading, Unloading
Tritium R&D
Our Plan:
Weapons activities end by 2020.

Los Alamos National Lab
Current Activities/Capabilities:
Nuclear Design/Engineering
Plutonium R&D and Pit Production
Assembly/Disassembly of Secondaries
Tritium Operations
Some Non-nuclear Components
High Explosives R&D
Hydrotesting
Weapons Env. Testing
Our Plan:
Reduce weapons/plutonium R&D.
Pit production capability put on
cold standby.
Replace tritium in the residual stockpile.
Transfer high explosives R&D to Pantex.
Reduce Weapons Env. Testing.
Maintain capabilities for surveillance
and certification.

Sandia National Laboratories
Current Activities/Capabilities:
Non-nuclear Design/Engineering
Some Non-nuclear Component Production
Explosive Components R&D
Major Weapons Env. Testing
Our Plan:
End weapons activities in CA.
Reduce weapons R & D in NM.
Maintain capabilities for surveillance
and certification.
Fabricate more types of nonnuclear
replacement parts for fewer weapons.

Pantex Plant
Current Activities/Capabilities:
Weapons Assembly/Disassembly
High Explosives R&D and Production
Weapons Dismantlement
Plutonium Pit Storage
Our Plan:
Increase weapons dismantlement.
Increase capacity for pit storage.

Residual Capabilities
in a 3-site Nuclear Weapons Complex
Supporting 500 Warheads

[Note: In "Environmental Testing" the Labs subject nuclear weapons to extremes of temperature, vibration, shock and radiation
to mimic the conditions of delivery to the target and ensure their performance during a nuclear war.]