

**2025 ANNUAL REPORT
RADIATION AND CHEMICAL DISPOSAL SITES
CORNELL UNIVERSITY
LANSING, NEW YORK**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This annual report summarizes the activities conducted in 2025 at Cornell's former Radiation Disposal Site (RDS) and Chemical Disposal Site (CDS) located north of the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport on Snyder Rd, Town of Lansing, Tompkins County, NY. Cornell is remediating these sites under Consent Orders with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). Additional information on site activities can be found at the disposal site's website: <https://ehs.cornell.edu/environmental-compliance/radiation-and-chemical-disposal-sites>

Hydrogeological and Climatological Conditions for 2025:

- Precipitation during 2025 was 2.4 inches below normal, or ~93% of normal.
- Groundwater elevations and flow patterns remained consistent with previous years.

Radiation Disposal Site Monitoring Activities Summary for 2025:

- Monitoring at the RDS in 2025 included water level measurements, groundwater and surface water sampling and analysis.
- Average concentrations of paradioxane in groundwater were generally lower in 2025 compared to pre-remediation levels from 2003 and 2004.

Chemical Disposal Site Monitoring Summary for 2025:

- Monitoring at the CDS in 2025 included water level measurements, and groundwater and surface water sampling and analysis.
- The groundwater plume of total volatile organic compounds (VOCs) remained relatively stable in terms of both chemicals detected and areal extent. Trichloroethylene (TCE) was the most frequently detected contaminant in monitoring wells, exceeding the NYS Ambient Water Quality Standard (AWQS) of 5 µg/L one or more times in eight of the wells sampled in 2025.
- Peak VOC concentrations in the center of the CDS Plume Collection System were consistent with recent years, showing a long-term downward trend.
- Semiannual surface water sampling from the drainage ditch south-west of the Plume Control System on airport property exhibited low levels of TCE, with concentrations below the NYS AWQS of 5 µg/L.

Remedial Measures Monitoring Activities Summary 2025:

- RDS Source Control System monitoring included inspections of the cap, side slope bank, side slope drainage and security fence.
- Paradoxane concentrations in groundwater near the disposal area decreased compared to pre-barrier wall installation levels.
- The RDS Groundwater Recovery System was operational throughout 2025.
- CDS Source Control System (SCS) activities included measuring water levels in well couplets inside and outside the barrier wall, cap inspections, and monitoring the flow from the CDS SCS to the Groundwater Treatment Plant.
- The CDS SCS functioned as intended throughout the year, maintaining an inward hydraulic gradient across the barrier wall.
- Both the CDS and RDS capping systems continued to be effective at preventing direct contact with the wastes and reducing precipitation infiltration.
- The CDS Plume Collection System (PCS) was effective in maintaining successfully maintained hydraulic control of the groundwater plume on airport property.
- Groundwater Treatment Plant (GWTP) monitoring included flow and pH measurements, along with monthly sampling of the effluent from the plant and the influent from the RDS Groundwater Recovery System, the CDS SCS and the CDS PCS.
- In 2025, the GWTP processed nearly 4.6 million gallons of groundwater and met discharge requirements set by the NYSDEC.
- Total hazardous waste generation from the GWTP in 2025 yielded one 55 gal drum.
- The GWTP discharged approximately 0.012 mCi of radiation (0.1% of the permitted annual activity) during 2025.

Future Plans and Recommendations

- Plans for 2026 involve ongoing environmental and performance monitoring of remedial measures, as outlined in the integrated Site Management Plan.
- In February 2025, a pulsing plan was implemented to monitor natural attenuation of contaminants. This two-year plan will continue through 2026 to determine if the PCS-Deep has reached asymptotic conditions and will help build a case for transitioning to long-term monitoring. Reviewing and refining operations, maintenance, and monitoring processes at the GWTP and in the field will remain a primary focus.
- Cornell is working with vendors to procure a new UV-OX System to potentially be installed in 2026. This will replace the existing system with newer more up to date controls.