

Wayne Allard

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ALLARD ASKS DOE TO MAKE DECISION ON 9975 CANISTERS AT ROCKY FLATS THREATENS AMENDMENT TO GET DOE DECISION ON ISSUE

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-CO) threatened on Tuesday to offer an amendment to the Department of Defense Authorization that would force the Department of Energy (DOE) to make a decision on the 9975 canisters that are to be used for shipment of highly radioactive material from Rocky Flats to the Savannah River site in South Carolina. The DOE has been delaying a decision on certification of the canisters since July, 1998.

“After waiting almost a year for a decision on the certification of the 9975 canisters by DOE, my patience has been exhausted,” Allard said. “A decision on this issue by DOE is vital to keeping Rocky Flats on track for a 2006 closure date. This was originally supposed to be done in July, 1998 by DOE and has been continually pushed back to the point that it is now delaying shipments to Savannah River. DOE needs to make a decision on these canisters immediately and begin the scheduled shipments to Savannah River before this begins to create new costly delays in the overall cleanup at Rocky Flats. I want a decision completed within thirty days, or I am going to be addressing this matter through legislation.”

Allard became originally involved in the 9975 canister issue earlier this year upon learning that the DOE had delayed their July, 1998 decision on certification to December, 1998. DOE then pushed back the decision to March, 1999, which now has been delayed again until August, 1999. Currently 3013 canisters of highly radioactive material are awaiting shipment to Savannah River from Rocky Flats pending a decision by DOE.

“The DOE has now missed four dates on making a decision on certification of these canisters,” added Allard. “It is clear to me without the threat of legislative action, DOE is not going to make this a top priority.” concluded Allard.