

MISSOURI

RADIOACTIVE WASTE

Lawmakers To Scrutinize Cleanup Changes

As the federal government prepares to transfer responsibility for cleaning up radioactive waste in St. Louis to the Corps of Engineers from the Department of Energy, some members of Congress will be watching.

Rep. Jim Talent, R-Chesterfield, along with Rep. Bill Pascrell, D-N.J., are forming a congressional group to oversee the transfer of cleanup responsibilities at 46 radioactive sites around the country.

Talent said he was "cautiously optimistic" that the change would not affect progress at the three large sites in St. Louis, which contain a total of about 900,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil. He said the situation should be watched closely.

The St. Louis contamination is the legacy of the development of the first atomic bombs. The Department of Energy was responsible for cleaning up the sites. However, Congress last month decided to transfer responsibility to the Corps of Engineers.

Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau