

1946 – Atomic Energy Commission created to regulate nuclear weapons, nuclear testing and peacetime applications like nuclear power.



1951 – U.S. government begins above-ground testing of nuclear bombs at the Nevada Test Site. Thousands of Utahns and Nevadans are stricken with radiation illnesses.



1954 – Nuclear weapons program results in a massive rush for uranium ore, turning Moab, Monticello and Blanding into boomtowns. Boom lasts several years, tapering off in the 1960s as military stockpiles are filled.



1959 – Cuba's pro-American government falls to insurgents, evoking fears of Soviet expansion into the Western Hemisphere. Cold War reaches its height with the construction of the Berlin Wall and the Cuban missile crisis in 1962.

1979 – Utah's first hazardous waste dump is started at Grassy Mountain, Tooele County, by Khosrow Semnani, who soon sells the facility to USPCI. Today, it is known as Safety-Kleen, which has filed for bankruptcy protection.



1988 – Semnani buys state lands around the stored Vitro tailings, turning the site into the nation's only commercial waste dump for low-level radioactive wastes, mostly mill tailings left over from Cold War-era industry and military testing programs.

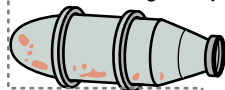


1990 – Congress passes the Radioactive Exposure Compensation Act to compensate downwinders and uranium mine and mill workers harmed by radiation. Congress expanded compensation to additional miners and mill workers last year.



1991 – The first hazardous waste incinerator is completed. Today known as the Safety Kleen at Aragonite.

2000 – Congress agrees to clean up tens of thousands of tons of uranium waste at the Atlatlas mill site outside Moab. The site is the last major mill on the Colorado River to be cleaned up.



2001 – Envirocare to petition Utah Legislature and governor to allow it to store radioactive wastes much hotter than it is currently licensed to accept at its Tooele County storage facility.

TIMELINE

1950

1945 – U.S. nuclear program becomes public with the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, bringing to end World War II. President Truman issues order that government will be the only customer for uranium.



1957 – Soviets launch Sputnik, prompting Cold War hysteria and an escalation in the demand for uranium needed for nuclear weapons.

1960



1963 – World's superpowers agree to ban above-ground nuclear tests, but underground tests would continue into the 1990s.



1968 – A military test of nerve gas in the desert west of Tooele goes awry, killing a herd of sheep grazing near the Dugway Proving Ground.

1970

1988 – Cleanup of the defunct Vitro uranium mill in South Salt Lake is completed, marking a surge in interest by a variety of waste companies in building waste dumps in Tooele County. County commissioners create a hazardous waste zone in the west desert, just beyond Skull Valley and the reaches of the Dugway Proving Ground as they welcome the waste as economic development.

1980



- 1997** – The Goshutes sign a lease to store 40,000 tons of nuclear waste on tribal lands.
- A municipal waste incinerator in Davis County opens for business. Citizens report a variety of illnesses they attribute to plant emissions.
- International Uranium Corp. near Blanding begins accepting radioactive materials from cleanup sites around the nation. The company calls it recycling, but the state says it is a sham for disposal of radioactive waste without a state license.
- A second hazardous waste incinerator is completed at Clive, Tooele County, but it shuts down almost immediately because of a lack of hazardous materials to burn.
- The Army begins to incinerate the nation's stockpile of biological and chemical weapons at a facility south of Tooele.

1990



2000

2002 – A consortium of nuclear power utilities hopes to begin construction on a high-level nuclear waste facility on Goshute lands about 70 miles south west of Salt Lake City. First shipments of waste to arrive in 2003.