

Rocky Flats Acronyms List
(compiled by the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board)

Acronym or Term	Means:	Definition	Pronunciation
ALARA	As low as reasonably achievable	This term has been used to describe certain cleanup goals for the site. The term is often used in the nuclear protection business to describe programs designed to limit worker exposure to contamination.	Ah-LAH-rah
Alpha Radiation		A type of radiation that is not very penetrating and can be blocked by materials such as human skin or paper. Alpha radiation presents its greatest risk when it gets inside the human body, such as when a particle of alpha emitting material is inhaled into the lungs. Plutonium, the radioactive material of greatest concern at Rocky Flats, produces this type of radiation.	AL-fah
Am	Americium	Americium is a radioactive element found at the site and results from the radioactive decay of plutonium.	Am-ur-EE-cee-um
AME TRG	Actinide Migration Evaluation Technical Review Group	A RFCAB committee that looks at migration of radioactive elements in the environment. The Actinide Migration studies themselves are conducted by a group of researchers that were hired by Kaiser-Hill, the site contractor. The committee follows the work of these researchers.	Say the letters
ARAR	Applicable, Relevant and Appropriate	Not only must CERCLA cleanups be protective of human health and the environment, but they must also meet specific standards from other environmental laws such as the Clean Water and Clean Air acts. These specific standards are called ARARs. Thus ARARs are the rules or regulations that may be applied to cleanup at a site, such as Rocky Flats.	AY-rar

Be	Beryllium	A very strong and lightweight metal that was used at Rocky Flats in the manufacture of nuclear weapons. Exposure to beryllium is now known to cause respiratory disease in those persons sensitive to it.	Bear-RIL-ee-um
Beta Radiation		A type of radiation more penetrating than alpha and hence requires more shielding. Some forms of uranium emit beta radiation.	BAY tah
BZ	Buffer Zone	The majority of the Rocky Flats site is open land that was added to provide a "buffer" between the neighboring communities and the industrial portion of the site. Approximately 6,000 of the total 6,500 acres of the site.	
CAD/ROD	Corrective action decision/Record of decision	When the final plan for cleanup and closure for Rocky Flats is complete, it will be recorded in this document. The Federal laws that govern the cleanup at Rocky Flats require a document of this sort.	CAD-Rod
CCP	Comprehensive Conservation Plan	The refuge plan being developed by the Fish and Wildlife Service.	Say the letters
CDPHE	Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment	State agency that regulates the site.	Say the letters, or sometimes called Cee-Dee-Fee
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act	Federal legislation that governs site cleanup. Also known as the Superfund Act.	SER-klah
COC	Contaminant of Concern	A hazardous or radioactive substance that is present at the site.	Say the letters

D&D	Decontamination and decommissioning	Refers to the process of cleaning up and tearing down buildings and other structures onsite.	Dee and Dee
DNFSB	Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board	A watchdog group chartered by Congress to oversee the safety of nuclear activities at Department of Energy nuclear weapons complex sites.	Say the letters
DOE	Department of Energy	Federal agency that manages and operates the site.	Say the letters
DOE-HQ	Department of Energy Washington, DC office	The national office of DOE.	Say the letters
DOE-RFFO	Department of Energy, Rocky Flats Field Office	The local office of DOE.	Say the letters
DU	Depleted uranium	Naturally occurring uranium is comprised of a blend of different forms of uranium called isotopes. Some of the isotopes are more capable of undergoing the process known as fission, which is important in sustaining a nuclear reaction. Natural uranium is treated to separate out the more fissionable from the less fissionable isotopes. The material that is left over when the more fissionable isotopes are removed is referred to as "depleted." A very strong material, depleted uranium was used at Rocky Flats to make shielding for tanks and also armor piercing missiles tips.	Say the letters
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement	Document required by the federal government that details environmental impacts of certain projects.	Say the letters
End State		Refers to how Rocky Flats will look after closure.	

EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	Federal agency that regulates the site. The local office of EPA is designated as Region VIII.	Say the letters
ER	Environmental Remediation	A fancy way of saying cleanup.	Say the letters
ER RSOP	Environmental Remediation RFCA Standard Operating Protocol	This document was written at the site to describe policies and procedures for "routine" cleanup activities, such as removing a small area of soil contamination. Rather than producing a new and separate document providing the same details for each and every cleanup activity, the site can refer back to the ER RSOP. There is some paperwork produced for individual projects that is very limited in scope, called a "notification." Generally, the notifications are released as information to the public, but no formal review and comment opportunity exists. The ER RSOP itself was released for formal public review and comment.	Ee-Are-ARE-Sop
FACA	Federal Advisory Committee Act	This federal law regulates RFCAB and the other site-specific advisory boards' activities. The law requires balanced membership and open meetings.	FA-kah
FWS	Fish and Wildlife Service	After it is closed, Rocky Flats will become a national wildlife refuge managed by this federal agency.	Say the letters, or sometimes called The Service
FY	Fiscal Year	The federal government's fiscal year runs from October 1 to September 30 each year. You will often hear them say FY 02 or FY 03, for example, when referring to a particular fiscal year. The target date for completing cleanup at Rocky Flats is FY 06.	Say the letters
Gamma Radiation		This type of radiation is very penetrating and requires heavy shielding to keep it from exposing people. Americium is a	GAM-ah

		nuclear material that releases gamma radiation.	
GAO	General Accounting Office	Prepares reports for Congress.	Say the letters
IA	Industrial Area	The central portion of the Rocky Flats site where the industrial activities took place. Roughly 350 of the 6,500 total acres of the site.	Say the letters
IHSS	Individual Hazardous Substance Site	A name given to a discrete area of known or suspected contamination. There are over two hundred such sites at Rocky Flats.	I-Hiss
IMP	Integrated Monitoring Plan	Term given to the comprehensive plan written at the site to describe the environmental monitoring that takes place for air and water.	Say the letters
IM/IRA	Intermediate Measure (RCRA)/ Intermediate Remedial Action (CERCLA)	Various types of documents can be written to describe cleanup activities at the site. This particular type of document is rather formal in nature and must undergo public review and comment. Generally, an IM/IRA focuses on a specific area at the site, such as a landfill or other area of major contamination. As part of the Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement, DOE, EPA, and CDPHE have agreed on which projects require this more formal written documentation.	Say the letters
K-H	Kaiser-Hill	The company that performs the work at Rocky Flats. Also known as the site contractor. Kaiser-Hill is a joint venture between two large companies, CH2M Hill and ICF Kaiser.	Say the letters
LLW / LLMW	Low Level Waste and Low Level Mixed Waste	Nuclear waste at Rocky Flats that does not have concentrations of plutonium above 100 nanocuries per gram is classified as low-level waste. In addition, waste that is contaminated with uranium is classified as low-level waste. Sometimes nuclear waste is mixed in with other waste materials such as chemicals	Say the letters

		and is given the term "mixed" waste. Waste that does not contain a mixture is often referred to as "straight" low-level waste. Low-level mixed waste from Rocky Flats is sent to a waste facility called Envirocare in Utah. The straight low level waste is sent to a DOE waste facility located at the Nevada Test Site in Nevada. The hazardous portion (i.e. the non-nuclear part) of mixed waste is regulated under the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). The State of Colorado administers the RCRA rules at Rocky Flats.	
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding	Term given to the agreement that will be reached between the Department of Energy and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concerning their respective roles in the future of the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge.	Say the letters
nCi	Nanocurie	Another unit of measurement of radioactivity. A nanocurie is larger than a picocurie (1 nanocurie = 1,000 picocuries).	Nah-no-cure-ree
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act	Federal legislation that requires the federal government to perform analyses of environmental consequences of major projects or activities. This is the law that stipulates that environmental impact statements be performed.	NEE-pah
OPWLs	Original (or Old) Process Waste Lines	Up to seven miles of lines located underneath the buildings at Rocky Flats that were used to transport radioactive liquids and chemicals from one building to another.	Say the letters
OU	Operable Unit	A term given to large areas at the site where cleanup will be focused. There are currently two OUs: the Buffer Zone and the Industrial Area. In the past, the site was divided into 16 different OUs, with each area given a number such as OU1 or OU2. This approach has largely been abandoned, with now only the two major OUs.	Say the letters
PAC	Potential Area of	A term given to areas at the site where there is a possibility	Pack

	Concern	that contamination might exist.	
PAM	Proposed Action Memorandum	Another form of documentation that describes a cleanup activity taken at the site. Generally, one can think of a PAM as being somewhere between the notification produced for a project being guided by the ER RSOP and the more formal IM/IRA. As with the IM/IRA, there is an opportunity for public comment.	Pam
PA	Protected Area	The most secure portion of the Rocky Flats site where work with plutonium was conducted. Razor-wire-topped fences, guard towers, and armed guards were some of the security features for this part of the site. In the past year, the size of the PA was reduced when all the plutonium was consolidated into just one facility, Building 371.	Say the letters
pCi/g	Picocurie	A unit of radiation. If a radioactive material such as plutonium is found in water, one would refer to its concentration as picocuries per liter of water; if found in soil, one would say picocuries per gram of soil. To gain an idea of relativity, the state standard for plutonium in water is 0.15 picocuries per liter. In soil, the average background of plutonium that is found in almost all soil due to material that was deposited there from atmospheric testing in the late 1950s and early 1960s is in the range of 0.01 - 0.04 picocuries per gram. DOE and the regulators are proposing a cleanup standard at Rocky Flats at 50 picocuries per gram. The current cleanup standard for plutonium set in 1996 is 1,429 picocuries per gram. There are areas at Rocky Flats where the levels reach 10,000 and greater. In property just outside the Rocky Flats boundaries, plutonium has been detected around 5 picocuries per gram.	Pee-co-cure-ree
POC	Point of Compliance (surface water)	A surface water locale that is monitored and must be found to be in compliance with federal and state standards for hazardous constituents. Violations of water quality standards at the points of compliance could result in DOE receiving financial penalties.	Say the letters

POE	Point of Evaluation (surface water)	These are locations at Rocky Flats at which surface water is monitored for water quality. There are no financial penalties associated with water quality exceedances at these locations, but the site may be required to develop a plan of action to improve the water quality.	Say the letters
PRG	Preliminary Remediation Goal	This is a term to describe the level of contamination at which the site sets a goal for cleanup.	Say the letters
Pu	Plutonium	Plutonium is a metallic substance that was fabricated to form the core or "trigger" of a nuclear weapon. Formation of these triggers was the primary production mission of the Rocky Flats site. Pu-239 is the primary radioactive element of concern at the site. There are different forms of plutonium, called isotopes. Each isotope is known by a different number. Hence, there are plutonium 239, 238, 241 and others.	Ploo-TOE-nee-um, or often called pee-you
Rad or Rads		Shorthand way of referring to radioactive materials or contaminants.	Rad(s)
Regulators		Term given to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Environmental Protection Agency, since they "regulate" or administer environmental laws at the site.	
RAC Study	Risk Assessment Corporation Study	The study that was conducted by Risk Assessment Corporation, an independent research group, from 1998 to 2000, to evaluate the RSALs established by DOE and the regulators in 1996.	Rack
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act	Federal law regulating hazardous waste.	RICK-Rah
RFCA	Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement	RFCA - signed by DOE, EPA and CDPHE - governs cleanup of the site.	RIFF-Kah
RFCLG	Rocky Flats	Organization comprised of area local governments including the	RIFF-Clog

	Coalition of Local Governments	city and county of Broomfield, the counties of Boulder and Jefferson, the cities of Arvada, Boulder and Broomfield, and the town of Superior.	
RFFO	Rocky Flats Field Office	DOE office at Rocky Flats.	Say the letters
RFNWR	Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge	After it is closed, Rocky Flats will become a national wildlife refuge managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.	
RSAL	Radionuclide Soil Action Level	A term developed in 1996 to describe the level at which radioactive soil contamination would be addressed at the site. The "action" could include removal, stabilization in place, continued monitoring, or doing nothing. For plutonium, the RSAL was set at 1,429 picocuries per gram, above which contamination would necessarily need to be removed. At levels below this number, the site could determine other actions to take such as stabilizing or monitoring the contamination to make sure that it would not migrate anywhere.	ARE-sal
RSALOP	Radionuclide Soil Action Levels Oversight Panel	This was a community group formed in 1998 to oversee an independent evaluation of the RSALs established by DOE and the regulators in 1996. (see RAC study)	ARE-sal-op
SEP	Solar Evaporation Ponds	An area at the site where wastewater containing materials such as nitrates and uranium was sent during the weapons production era to be evaporated by the sun in large open ponds.	Say the letters
SNM	Special Nuclear Materials	Term given to materials such as plutonium and uranium.	Say the letters
SAP	Sampling and Analysis Plan	Term given to documentation that describes how the site will perform sampling to characterize areas of potential	Sap

		environmental contamination at the site. Two such plans include the Industrial Area SAP (often called the IA SAP, pronounced eye-ai-sap) and the Buffer Zone SAP (BZ SAP, pronounced bee-zee-sap).	
SPP	Solar Ponds Plume	Groundwater contamination plume resulting from seepage of contaminants from the solar evaporation ponds. Contaminants are mainly nitrates and uranium.	Say the letters
Tier I RSAL		When DOE and the regulators established the radionuclide soil action levels in 1996, they established two different sets of numbers. The TIER I number was an upper limit for which radioactive contamination above this level would require digging up and removing from the site as nuclear waste.	Teer One
Tier II RSAL		As above, the TIER II was another level for radionuclide soil action levels. Contamination levels falling below the TIER II numbers are essentially considered non-hazardous and could be left alone. Contamination levels falling between the two tiers would be subject to examination to determine what "action" should be taken. The action could be removal, but it could also be stabilization in place or monitoring to make sure that it was not migrating.	Teer Two
TRU or TRU waste	Transuranic waste	Transuranic refers to elements in the periodic table having a higher atomic number than uranium, such as plutonium. Transuranic waste contains more than 100 nanocuries of alpha-emitting isotopes - with half-lives greater than 20 years - per gram of waste.	TRUE waste
TRUPAC		Name given to the waste container in which transuranic waste is loaded and transported from Rocky Flats to the WIPP facility.	TRUE-pack
UBC	Under Building Contamination	Term given to contaminants that might be located below the foundations of buildings.	Say the letters

VOC	Volatile organic compound	These compounds include cleaning solvents that were used in the manufacturing operations at Rocky Flats. Some of the names of the VOCs used at Rocky Flats, and that are found as environmental contaminants, include carbon tetrachloride (often called carbon tet), trichloroethene (also called TCE), perchloroethylene (also called PCE), and methylene chloride.	Say the letters
Wackenhut		The company responsible for security at the Rocky Flats site.	WHACK-en-hut
WIPP	Waste Isolation Pilot Plant	A nuclear waste disposal facility in Carlsbad, New Mexico where the transuranic waste from Rocky Flats is shipped.	Whip