



Frequently Asked Questions for BWXT Ordnance Tennessee (Proposed HPDU Facility and Aerojet Sites) Washington County, TN

12/10/2025

Existing Facility (Aerojet Facility)

- What does the existing facility make?
 - The Aerojet facility manufactures specialized components for defense and aerospace industries. It is essentially a metalworking facility creating various specialized metal alloys. The facility began production in 1969 and was acquired by BWXT in 2025. The existing Aerojet Facility receives depleted uranium as this is used in the products they manufacture.
- Has TDEC received any permit requests at their existing facility?
 - TDEC Division of Radiological Health (DRH) has approved a license amendment for Aerojet's existing HPDU project on its current site to increase the facility's output from pilot scale to production scale.
 - On May 14, 2025, BWXT Ordnance Tennessee submitted an insignificant activity/insignificant emissions unit request for a new High Purity Depleted Uranium (HPDU) process to TDEC's Division of Air Pollution Control. This expanded process will result in emissions of air pollutants below the permitting thresholds. An insignificant activity/insignificant emission unit letter was issued by the Division on June 9, 2025. Thus, the process is not required to obtain an air quality permit. The BWXT request and the Division's insignificant activity/insignificant emissions unit letters can be found on our dataviewer at:
https://dataviewers.tdec.tn.gov/dataviewers/f?p=19031:34051::::34051:P34051_PERMIT_ID:100351.
 - TDEC Division of Water Resources is working on a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) renewal to the existing permit TN0057983 for the Aerojet Facility. Please note that the NPDES being reviewed is for renewal of an EXISTING permit first issued in the 1970s. An NPDES permit regulates the release of treated industrial wastewater. Information on the permit can be found on our dataviewer at:



[https://dataviewers.tdec.tn.gov/dataviewers/fp=2005:34051:2481731262557
:::34051:P34051_PERMIT_NUMBER:TN0057983](https://dataviewers.tdec.tn.gov/dataviewers/fp=2005:34051:2481731262557:::34051:P34051_PERMIT_NUMBER:TN0057983)

- Does TDEC monitor this facility?
 - The Division of Radiological Health (DRH) performs monthly independent site-specific monitoring of air and water for radioactive effluents in and around BWXT Ordnance Tennessee as well as routine compliance inspections. The facility's license number is S-90009 with a current inspection frequency of every two years. Their last compliance inspection was performed in September 2025 with no items of non-compliance.
 - The Division of Solid Waste Management (DSWM) performs Hazardous Waste compliance evaluation inspections at Aerojet Ordnance Tennessee, TND 05-398-2807. Since it is a small quantity generator of HW, the DSWM inspects these facilities on a 5-year cycle, typically. The last inspection was performed on August 3, 2022, and no violations were observed.
 - The Division of Water Resources (DWR) has 2 permits associated with the BWXT facility located in Washington County, TN, (formerly Aerojet). DWR serves as regulatory oversight: reviewing monitoring data, conducting inspections every 5 years or more frequently, and ensuring compliance with permit conditions. Permit TNR051099 (Tennessee Multi-Sector Permit for discharge of stormwater) & permit TN005798 (NPDES) inspections were last conducted in 2022 which was a Compliance Biomonitoring Inspection. These inspections were found to be in compliance.
 - The Division of Air Pollution Control BWXT Ordnance Tennessee, Inc., 90-0047, is a True Minor Source. True Minor Sources are worked into the inspection workload as time allows. The last inspection at the facility was October 31, 2023. No violations were found for active permit 079430, which is for a surface coating operation. Records for the facility, including but not limited to inspection reports, permit, applications, and insignificant activities, can be found on APC's Data viewer,
https://dataviewers.tdec.tn.gov/dataviewers/f?p=19031:34051::::34051:P34051_PERMIT_ID:100351.
- Is TDEC aware of buried radioactive material on this property?
 - Yes. In the mid-1980s Aerojet completed the remediation of a retention pond. The soil left from that project and other areas was placed into an internment



cell on the property. This cell was constructed above the flood plain following NRC guidance and was approved by TDEC. This internment cell is the cause for the restrictive covenant on the land and states that there may not be excavation below a specific depth in the internment cell area without prior approval by authorities. The internment cell is well maintained and there is no proposed construction in this area.

- Will BWXT's proposed HPDU facility be built at the Aerojet facility in Jonesborough TN?
 - No, the proposed HPDU facility would be built on property adjacent to the Aerojet Facility.
- BWXT is wanting to expand its nuclear plant in Jonesborough. Will the expansion of the facility affect our air quality and drinking water?
 - The permits issued by TDEC are designed to be protective of air and water quality and require compliance with all current applicable standards and regulations set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and TDEC. The issuance of a permit does not grant any authority to construct or operate the facility in violation of any law, statute, code, ordinance, rule, or regulation of the State of Tennessee. The decision to issue or deny a permit application is not discretionary or assumptive. If the applicant meets the standards set forth in the regulations, TDEC must issue the permit.
- If BWXT expands on the new site, will construction activity affect streams/wetlands, what process are in place to protect water quality?
 - Before construction activity begins, the applicant should submit a hydrologic determination report that identifies any waters/wetlands that may be impacted. Hydrologic determinations are usually submitted by third party professionals and categorizes features as Waters of the State (WOTS) or Wet Weather Conveyances (WWC) and in the case of wetlands as Isolated or Non-isolated. Wetlands also receive a quality score based on the Tennessee Rapid Assessment Method (TRAM). TDEC will verify the submitted determination(s) before permits are issued. If the construction proposes impacts to WOTS or Wetlands, then coverage under the appropriate Aquatic Resource Alteration Permit (ARAP) would need to be obtained before alterations begin.



Proposed property expansion

- Can TDEC answer our questions about zoning for the new site?
 - TDEC is not involved with zoning ordinances or decisions. Please consult with local authorities for more information. TDEC permits do not supersede or negate local planning or zoning authority.
- Has TDEC received any permit requests for the proposed new HPDU facility?
 - TDEC has not received any license/permit amendments or applications related to this proposed property.
- Will TDEC perform an environmental review?
 - Environmental impact reviews are required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA generally applies to federal actions or those projects that have significant federal involvement or funding. TDEC is responsible to review and comment on NEPA documents generated by federal agencies. Please be aware that DOE issued an Environmental Assessment for Off-Site Depleted Uranium Manufacturing in October 2024 (DOE/EA-2252). A finding of No Significant Impact for the Environmental Assessment for Off-Site Depleted Uranium Manufacturing was issued in November 2024. TDEC understands that the High Purity Depleted Uranium award made to BWXT was not considered as part of the October 2024 EA and DOE NNSA will prepare an additional NEPA review for this recently proposed action.
- Is TDEC aware of buried radioactive material on this property?
 - TDEC is aware of the internment cell that is covered under their licensure and located on their current Aerojet site.
- When is the new facility expected to start receiving depleted uranium and will the Aerojet Facility also start receiving depleted uranium?
 - TDEC has not seen a schedule for completion of the proposed facility and recommends people reach out to BWXT for this information. The existing Aerojet Facility already receives depleted uranium as this is used in the products they manufacture.



- Will a full Section 106 review of the BWXT site be conducted for archaeological and tribal significance?
 - If the proposed project has a federal nexus, it is subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR 800. In such cases, as the lead federal agency, the EPA must take into account the effects of the project on historic properties, including archaeological sites. Federal agencies, or applicants for federal permits, licenses, or other assistance, often meet these requirements by conducting a Phase I archaeological survey to identify archaeological sites that may be affected and that may be listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. If a listed or eligible site is identified and cannot be avoided, then the lead federal agency must consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer and consulting parties, including federally recognized Tribal Nations, to assess effects and resolve any that are adverse.
- Will there be formal consultation with the Cherokee Nation and Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians regarding potential cultural resources?
 - The Section 106 process requires the lead federal agency to consult with the State Historic Preservation Office and consulting parties, including federally recognized Tribal Nations, on each step of the process including definition of the Area of Potential Effects, the identification and evaluation of historic properties (including archaeological sites), determination of effects, and the resolution of any adverse effects.