

*Habitability of the Love Canal Area: An  
Analysis of the Technical Basis for the  
Decision on the Habitability of the  
Emergency Declaration Area*

June 1983

NTIS order #PB84-114917

**HABITABILITY OF THE  
LOVE CANAL AREA**

AN ANALYSIS OF THE TECHNICAL BASIS FOR THE DECISION  
ON THE HABITABILITY OF THE EMERGENCY DECLARATION AREA

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A TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

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JUNE 1983

GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES  
Office of Technology Assessment  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20545

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# Foreword

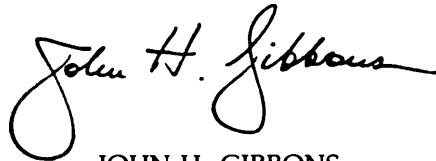
In December 1982, OTA was requested by Senators Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Alfonse D'Amato of New York to perform a case study of Love Canal. The request came at a time when OTA was completing its 3-year study of hazardous wastes. OTA's report *Technologies and Management Strategies for Hazardous Waste Control* was released in March 1983. OTA's larger study on hazardous wastes formed the basis for the case study on Love Canal.

The principal goal of the case study was to examine the technical basis for, and validity of, the habitability decision for the emergency declaration area near Love Canal. This decision was made by the Department of Health and Human Services, and was based principally on the results of a monitoring study conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency. OTA was also asked to examine the current monitoring and cleanup activities at Love Canal, and the plans for future remedial action.

This technical memorandum consists of three principal sections:

1. OTA's findings on the habitability decision, and the four arguments on which they are based.
2. An outline of the steps that could be taken to safely achieve incremental rehabilitation of the emergency declaration area.
3. Implications of the results of this case study for the national Superfund program for uncontrolled hazardous waste sites, under which cleanup at Love Canal is proceeding.

The timely completion of this study was made possible by the extensive assistance provided by many people at several New York State agencies, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the National Bureau of Standards.



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