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Safe management of uranium milling waste

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The mining of uranium ores by underground and by surface methods produces large and small amounts of bulk waste material such as excavated top soil, overburden that contains only traces of ore, weakly uranium-enriched waste rock, subgrade ores and evaporation pond sludges and scales. These materials typically contain radionuclides of radium, uranium, and thorium. TENORM may be present in mining wastes. These wastes, most significantly from uranium mining, may be generated in large volumes. Because the waste rock and soil have little or no practical use, they are generally stored on land near the mine site. Some countries began conducting studies to assess the risk to human health and the environment from industrial releases of materials that are now categorized as TENORM.

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