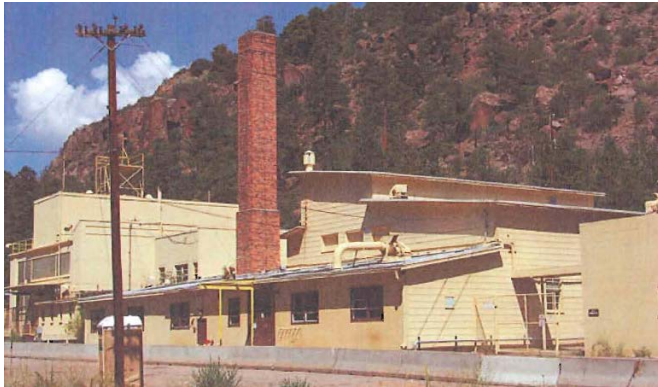


## Is there a nuclear reactor at Los Alamos?



*Figure 1 Omega Site reactor buildings (LANL photo)*

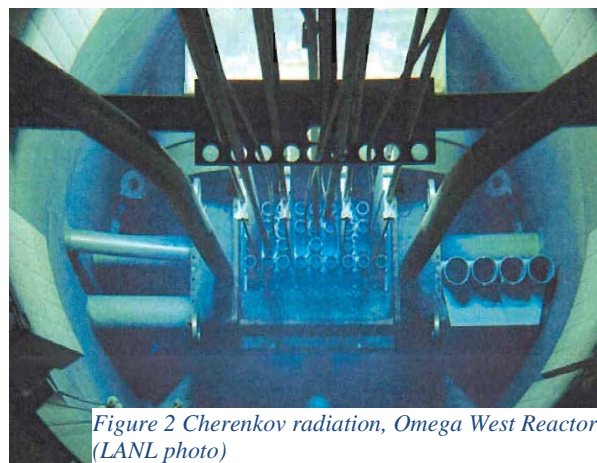
Not anymore. During the Manhattan Project, scientists built the first of several “water boiler” reactors in Los Alamos Canyon at the Omega Site. This reactor used a solution of enriched uranium in water, and helped scientists explore the behavior of enriched uranium.

Each water boiler was replaced by another, more powerful reactor through three generations. The longest lived, and last of these research reactors, Supo, operated until 1974. It was dismantled in 1989.

In 1946, an additional building was constructed to house “Clementine,” a plutonium research reactor named by Robert Wilson after the song that includes the words, “In a cavern in a canyon,” and “They were miners, forty-niners.” 49 Was a code name for plutonium. By 1953, Clementine had served her purpose and was replaced by the Omega West Reactor which operated until 1992.

Omega Site was demolished in 2002, and environmental remediation in Los Alamos Canyon continues to this day. The museum offices have an aerial photo that shows Omega Site being reoccupied by vegetation.

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*Figure 2 Cherenkov radiation, Omega West Reactor (LANL photo)*