



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD
2300 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1300
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For Immediate Release*

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Yucca Mountain Safety Strategy Focus of Board's September Meeting

On Tuesday and Wednesday, September 14 and 15, the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board (Board) will meet in Alexandria, Virginia, to review the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) safety strategy for a proposed Yucca Mountain repository. The Board also will be briefed by the DOE on several scientific and technical studies being conducted at the site. The DOE is characterizing the Yucca Mountain site, located about 100 miles northwest of Las Vegas, Nevada, to determine its suitability as the location of a repository for the permanent disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste.

The meeting will be held at the Ramada Plaza Hotel, 901 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-1501. The telephone number is (703) 683-6000. The meeting sessions will begin at 9:00 a.m. on both days.

On the morning of September 14, the DOE will update the Board on events that have taken place recently within the civilian radioactive waste management program and the Yucca Mountain project. Presentations will be made on issues important to the performance of a potential repository, including the effects of waste heat on repository behavior, the significance of chlorine-36 isotope found in exploratory tunnels, the characteristics and processes of the saturated zone that will affect radionuclide releases, and results from corrosion tests of waste package materials. An update on repository design also will be presented.

In the afternoon, the DOE will make a series of presentations on the latest version of its repository safety strategy. Included will be an analysis of the defense-in-depth envisioned for the repository system and identification of key research priorities that the project will address over the next 18 months.

The morning session on September 15 will focus on the DOE's work to revise its total system performance assessment (TSPA) and on the use of multiple lines of evidence to a strategy for demonstrating the safety of the proposed Yucca Mountain repository. Included among the presentations will be a discussion of the treatment of uncertainty in the TSPA, especially the use

of bounding analyses. The use of natural analogs, or naturally occurring phenomenon that could increase understanding of conditions at Yucca Mountain of the performance of waste package materials, also will be discussed. The afternoon session will be devoted to presentations on model validation by the DOE and a subsequent roundtable discussion of this issue.

The two-day meeting will be open to the public. Time for public comment will be set aside at approximately 11:30 a.m. on both days and at the end of the afternoon session (approximately 4:30 p.m.) on September 14. Those wanting to speak are encouraged to sign the "Public Comment Register" at the check-in table. Depending on the number of requests, a time limit may be imposed on oral statements, but written comments of any length may be submitted for inclusion in the record of the meeting. Interested parties also may submit questions in writing to the Board. As time permits, written questions will be answered during the sessions.

A detailed agenda will be available approximately one week before the meeting. Copies of the agenda can be requested by telephone or obtained from the Board's Web site at www.nwtrb.gov. Transcripts of the meeting will be available on the Board's Web site, via e-mail, on computer disk, and on a library-loan basis in paper format from Davonya Barnes, Board staff, beginning on October 18, 1999. For further information, contact, Paula Alford, External Affairs, NWTRB, at 2300 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1300, Arlington, Virginia 22201-3367; (tel) 703-235-4473; (fax) 703-235-4495; (e-mail) info@nwtrb.gov.

At block of rooms has been reserved at the Ramada Plaza Hotel. Individuals wishing to reserve one of those rooms must do so by August 30, 1999. To receive the preferred rate, please indicate that you are attending the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board meeting.

The Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board was created by Congress in the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1987. Its purpose is to evaluate the technical and scientific validity of activities undertaken by the DOE related to managing the disposal of the nation's spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste. In the same legislation, Congress directed the DOE to characterize a site at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, to determine its suitability as the location of a potential repository for the permanent disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste.
