

Transporting Low-Level Waste to the Nevada Test Site

safety ❖ performance ❖ cleanup ❖ closure



Safety is the first priority for the Environmental Management mission at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration Nevada Site Office. In fact, this commitment to safety is integrated at DOE sites that generate low-level and mixed low-level waste that is permanently disposed at the Nevada Test Site (NTS).



Waste generators are responsible for ensuring that waste is packaged and transported in a safe and compliant manner. These generators and the contracted commercial carriers must comply with U.S. Department of Transportation regulations, NTS Waste Acceptance Criteria, and other applicable federal, state, and local regulations and requirements.

Routing Preferences

Carriers are responsible for selecting transportation routes which minimize radiological risk and are in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation regulations. The Nevada Site Office makes every effort to consider the concerns of stakeholders in areas neighboring the NTS. The NTS Waste Acceptance Criteria addresses waste transportation and forbids low-level and mixed low-level waste shipments across Hoover Dam and through the Las Vegas metropolitan area.

In combination with these requirements, the Nevada Site Office has identified preferred routes (see map on reverse side) and advises generators to conform to the following guidelines:

- Avoid heavily populated/congested areas in the state of Nevada (including the Las Vegas Beltway, I-215)
- Avoid Davis Dam (AZ-68 and NV-163)
- Use the northern route, I-80 (see map on reverse) during summer months (May - October)

- Use the southern routes during the winter months (November - April), but divide shipments between CA-127 and NV-160 (see map on reverse)
- Direct carrier drivers to complete the mandatory driver questionnaire

The Nevada Site Office may suspend generator shipments if waste is not transported in compliance with the identified requirements and guidelines.



Emergency Response

A Nevada Site Office grant funds emergency preparedness activities and resources in counties near the NTS. This grant is funded by an additional fee charged to generators which is based upon the volume of waste disposed. Approximately \$7.5 million dollars has been distributed to Clark, Elko, Esmeralda, Lincoln, Nye and White Pine counties to enhance emergency response capabilities.

The Nevada Site Office also strives to accommodate a request by the State of California to limit the number of shipments that travel along California Highway CA-127 due to extremely limited and remote emergency response capabilities (see blackout dates on reverse).

Definitions

Carrier: The trucking company which transports radioactive waste from the generator site to the Nevada Test Site.

Generators: U.S. Department of Defense and U.S. Department of Energy Environmental Management sites that generate low-level and mixed low-level radioactive waste through cleanup activities.

U.S. Department of Transportation: The federal agency which regulates the packaging and transportation of radioactive materials in accordance with Title 49 in the Code of Federal Regulations.

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Preferred low-level and mixed low-level waste transportation routes to the Nevada Test Site.

2009 Black-Out Dates for CA-127

Generators must advise their carriers to avoid transporting low-level and mixed low-level waste shipments along CA-127 on the following dates:

Dec. 28, 2008 - Jan. 4, 2009; Jan. 16-19;
 Feb. 13-16; Mar. 14-15; Mar. 30-Apr. 19;
 Apr. 23-28; May 8-10; May 22-25;
 Jul. 3-6; Sep. 4-7; Oct. 9-12;
 Oct. 30 - Nov. 1; Nov. 6-11; Nov. 25-29;
 Dec. 20 - Jan. 4, 2010

Permitted Shipments

Overweight and/or oversized shipments may require a state-issued permit prior to being transported through Nevada or neighboring states. In order to ensure these permitted shipments are not routed through the Las Vegas Valley, carriers must inform the state-issuing Department of Transportation (or the Highway Patrol if dictating routing) that the cargo is a radioactive shipment en route to the NTS and that routing preferences should be observed. It is important to note that oversized shipments cannot be transported on NV-160.

For more information, please contact:

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For information on all Nevada Site Office Environmental Management activities visit:

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