

What's News at Yucca Mountain

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NRC Dockets Yucca Mountain Application

September 8th, 2008:

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has formally docketed the Department of Energy's license application for the proposed high-level nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. The agency staff has also recommended that the Commission adopt, with further supplementation, DOE's Environmental Impact Statement for the repository project.

The decision to docket the application follows the NRC



staff's determination that the application, submitted June 3, is sufficiently complete for the staff to begin its full technical review.

Docketing the application does not indicate whether the Commission will approve or reject the construction authorization for the repository, nor does it preclude the Commission or the agency staff from requesting additional information from DOE during the course of its comprehensive technical review.

Docketing the application triggers a three-year dead-

line, with a possible one-year extension, set by Congress for the NRC to decide whether to grant a construction authorization. NRC officials have stated that meeting this deadline is contingent on the agency receiving sufficient resources from Congress.

After reviewing DOE's Environmental Impact Statement and its supplements, the NRC staff determined that it would be practicable for the agency to adopt the DOE report. However, the staff is requesting that DOE supplement some aspects of its groundwater analyses.

Documents related to these actions are available on the NRC web site at. <http://nrc.gov/>

EPA sets Yucca radiation standards

No one knows what the Earth will be like in a million years. But the Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste site must be designed to ensure that people living near it then are exposed to no more than 100 millirems of radiation annually — equivalent to about a half-dozen X-rays.

And over the next 10,000 years, radiation exposure to the waste site neighbors may be no more than 15 millirems a year, which is about what people get from an ordinary X-ray.

**NUCLEAR
WASTE SITE:
DOE must prove
system can meet
safety requirement**

People receive about 350 millirems a year of radiation on average from all background sources.

After three years of deliberations, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) an-

nounced Tuesday, September 30th, its radiation health standard for the proposed nuclear waste repository.

The Yucca Mountain high-level radioactive waste site is scheduled to open in 2020 if a license application is approved by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The EPA has struggled to comply with a 2004 court directive that said it must establish a radiation health standard for a million years into the future

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