

# DOE NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, YUCCA MOUNTAIN PROJECT, LAS VEGAS, NV 89134

News Media Contact:  
Allen Benson (702) 794-1322

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Yucca Mountain Documents Made Available for Licensing Proceeding**

*1.2 Million Documents, Some 5.6 Million Pages, Available Via The Internet*

WASHINGTON, June 30, 2004 -- The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today certified to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) the public availability through the Internet of approximately 1.2 million documents totaling some 5.6 million pages regarding Yucca Mountain. The documents are available on the Department's website, and will be included in the NRC's Licensing Support Network (LSN). This certification is in anticipation of DOE's submitting a license application for Yucca Mountain to the NRC by December of this year. Following submittal of the license application, the Commission will conduct a full and public adjudicatory process on the license application, for which Federal law contemplates a three- to four-year time period.

DOE has previously released a substantial number of scientific documents related to Yucca Mountain, including the Yucca Mountain Science and Engineering Report, Site Suitability Evaluation, and Final Environmental Impact Statement. Many of the 1.2 million documents served as background material for those reports. The documents represent the scientific studies, evaluations, and opinions of more than 20 years of scientific study of Yucca Mountain. Each individual document represents only a piece of the information in the development of the license application. All information must be considered in context and as part of the entire set of documents for any user to draw substantive conclusions about the scientific information in the license application. Selective use of individual documents or portions of documents by any user, including DOE, outside the context provided by other relevant documents is likely to result in inappropriate, faulty, or misleading conclusions.

If the 5.6 million pages searchable on the Internet were stacked one on top of the other, the stack would reach a height of approximately 1,800 feet – some 3 times the height of the Washington Monument. Laid end-to-end, these 5.6 million pages would extend approximately 1,000 miles or almost one-half the distance from Washington, D.C. to Las Vegas, NV.

The DOE will be providing additional documents to the LSN as an ongoing activity. Other participants in the licensing proceeding are also required to submit documents to the LSN.

DOE's documents may be accessed today at <http://www.ocrwm.doe.gov>, and will be available through the NRC's LSN web site at <http://www.lsnnet.gov>. Persons without access to Internet connections may use the public access computers at the Las Vegas Yucca Mountain Information Center - 4101B Meadows Lane, Las Vegas, NV; at the public reading room (1E-190), U.S. Department of Energy, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C.; or at most libraries worldwide.



## **YUCCA MOUNTAIN FACT SHEET: The Licensing Support Network**

In December 2004, the Department of Energy intends to submit a license application to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for a repository to be sited at Yucca Mountain, NV. The Commission's regulations and the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 outline the process the Commission and the Department must follow in the evaluation of any license application. The Department is required to identify its documentary material and initially certify that it has made it electronically available six months prior to submittal of a license application. The Department is required to update its certification at the time of license submittal. Since the Department is still working on the technical documents it intends to rely on for the license application, it will be producing additional documents between now and the updated certification. Following submittal of the license application, the Commission will conduct a full and public adjudicatory process on the license application. Federal law contemplates a three- to four-year time period for the decision on the license application.

**The Licensing Support Network:** On June 30, 2004, the Department of Energy certified that it made available in electronic format its documentary materials to ensure access to documents related to the licensing of a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain, by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the State of Nevada, participants in the licensing proceeding, and the public. The certification followed the requirements set forth by the Commission.

The Licensing Support Network is an electronic, Internet-based discovery system that will contain the Department's documentary material as well as that of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and other parties and potential parties to the proceeding. The purpose of the Licensing Support Network is to allow the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the public, and parties to the licensing proceeding electronic access to the results of scientific studies and other information used to develop the license application. Information in the Licensing Support Network can be used to help understand the scientific reasoning and basis for the Department's license application. It is intended to provide documents similar to those produced by the discovery process typically used in Nuclear Regulatory Commission licensing proceedings, but much earlier in the process.

**The Content Of The Licensing Support Network:** The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's regulations require that three categories of documentary material be made electronically available. These categories are: (1) information that parties to the licensing process, including the Department, intend to rely on to support their position in the licensing proceeding; (2) information that is relevant to but does not support that information or the party's position; and (3) all reports and studies prepared by or on behalf of a party that are relevant to the license regardless of whether the party intends to rely upon and/or cite them.

The documents made available by the Department contain a broad spectrum of technical facts, professional opinions, and technical positions related to the scientific basis for and ultimate licensing of the Yucca Mountain site. This information was generated through a process of scientific inquiry about the safety of a repository at Yucca Mountain. This information can be used for the development and resolution of contentions.

The Department of Energy has made available approximately 1,245,000 documents totaling some 5.6 million pages in full text searchable format. Additional documents are being made available as header only in accordance with the NRC regulations for privileged material and non-imageable documents. Electronic access to these documents should shorten the time needed for exchange of documents in the licensing proceeding. The documents represent the scientific studies, evaluations, and opinions of more than 20 years of scientific study of Yucca Mountain. Each individual document represents only a piece of the information in the development of the license application. All information must be considered in context and as part of the entire set of documents for any user to draw substantive conclusions about the scientific information in the license application. Selective use of individual documents or portions of documents by any user, including the Department, outside the context provided by other relevant documents, is likely to result in inappropriate, faulty, or misleading conclusions.

The Secretary of Energy found the Yucca Mountain site to be scientifically and technically suitable in accordance with provisions of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. The President and Congress approved this finding and allowed the Department to prepare a license application. The final decision to authorize construction of a repository resides with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Access To The Licensing Support Network:** The Licensing Support Network is accessible to the public through the Internet at <http://www.lsnnet.gov>. Persons without access to internet connections may use the public access computers at the Las Vegas Yucca Mountain Information Center at 4101B Meadows Lane, Las Vegas, NV; at the Public Reading Room (Room 1E-190), U.S. Department of Energy, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC; or at most libraries worldwide.

In addition to the Licensing Support Network, the Department will make its documentary material electronically available in a fully searchable format on its web site at <http://www.ocrwm.doe.gov>. Until the Licensing Support Network Administrator completes indexing all of Department's available documentary material, an electronic search using the Licensing Support Network search engine will not capture all documents that are available, including headers for documents the Department designated as privileged. On the other hand, an electronic search using the Department's web site will capture all available documents and headers. This will remain true through the course of updates and supplements to the Department's document collection.