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For Immediate Release*

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## **DOE to Brief Panels on Yucca Mountain Site-Suitability Studies**

The Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board's (Board) panels on Structural Geology & Geoengineering and Hydrogeology & Geochemistry will hold a joint panel meeting with Department of Energy (DOE) representatives on March 6-7, 1991, in Denver, Colorado. Panel members will review studies crucial to determining the suitability of the site at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, as a possible location for a permanent repository for commercial spent fuel and defense high-level radioactive waste. The one and one-half day meeting, which is open to the public, will be held at the Stouffer Concourse Hotel, 3801 Quebec Street, Denver, Colorado 80207; (303) 399-7500. Sessions will begin at 8:30 A.M. They will adjourn at 5:00 P.M., on Wednesday, March 6, and at 12:00 noon on Thursday, March 7.

On Wednesday, panel members will hear a final presentation by representatives of the DOE and its contractors on the Calico Hills risk/benefit analysis (CHRBA) study and an interim presentation on the Yucca Mountain test-prioritization task. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the relationship between these two studies and on reviewing data that support including the saturated zone in the CHRBA model as an additional barrier to the migration of radionuclides to the accessible environment.

On Thursday, March 7, the DOE will make a final presentation on the study of alternatives for the exploratory shaft facility (ESF) and on an interim review of the Yucca Mountain site-suitability task. The ESF alternatives study review will address ongoing DOE efforts to prepare for the preliminary design phase of the ESF.

The Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board was established in the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1987 to evaluate the scientific and technical validity of activities undertaken by the DOE's civilian radioactive waste management program, specifically site-characterization activities and activities relating to the packaging and transport of high-level radioactive waste. In the same legislation, Congress directed the DOE to characterize the site at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, for the proposed development of an underground repository for the permanent isolation of commercial spent fuel and defense high-level waste.

Transcripts of the meeting will be available on a library-loan basis from Victoria Reich, NWTRB librarian beginning March 21, 1991.

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