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NRC LAUNCHES ON-LINE DISCUSSION OF ELECTRONIC
LICENSING SYSTEM FOR HIGH-LEVEL WASTE REPOSITORY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has launched a discussion on the Internet as a first step toward updating plans for the Licensing Support System — an electronic information management program to be used in the eventual licensing of a high-level radioactive waste repository.

The program, known as LSSNet, may be reached at this Internet address: <http://lssnet.llnl.gov>. It will continue through next May 20.

The dialogue proposed through LSSNet is not intended to replace formal comments on any proposed rule that may be developed to update the Licensing Support System. Instead, it will give interested persons a chance to provide their comments and questions to NRC before the text of any rule is developed. Through this process, NRC can analyze comments and questions, assess which questions arise most often, and then post a list of "frequently asked questions" and their answers. If LSSNet indicates changes to the existing Licensing Support System rule are necessary, a formal rulemaking will be initiated.

Using LSSNet, interested members of the public, potential users of the system, and the Licensing Support System Advisory Review Panel can communicate both with NRC and among themselves in defining issues and proposing alternatives before a new rulemaking proceeding formally begins.

The Licensing Support System Advisory Review Panel consists of representatives of NRC, the Department of Energy, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the State of Nevada, local governments in Nevada, the National Congress of American Indians and the nuclear industry. It was chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act to advise NRC on the design, development and use of the Licensing Support System.

In setting up LSSNet, NRC has built on an earlier project, RuleNet, which successfully engaged an on-line discussion of fire-protection regulation in November 1995. More detailed information on LSSNet is available in a notice in the November 20 edition of the Federal Register.

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