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**UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD**  
2300 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1300  
Arlington, VA 22201-3367

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For Immediate Release*

*Frank Randall  
External Affairs*

**Repository Performance and Uncertainties:  
How will the engineered and natural barriers respond?**

Repository system performance and uncertainties about the engineered and natural barriers at Yucca Mountain headline the Board's summer meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, June 25-26, 1997. The meeting will begin at 8:00 a.m. both days and is open to the public. It will be held at the Crowne Plaza, 4255 S. Paradise Road, Las Vegas, Nevada 89109; Tel: 702-369-4400; Fax: 702-369-3770.

On Wednesday, June 25, Department of Energy (DOE) representatives will update the Board on the high-level nuclear waste management program and the viability assessment for Yucca Mountain. A representative of the state of Nevada also will comment on the viability assessment. The remainder of the morning will be devoted to system performance and uncertainties associated with the repository design and the engineered barrier system. Presenters will speak on the DOE waste containment and isolation strategy, waste package performance, repository design and operations, waste package design and materials, and the behavior of cementitious materials in a potential repository.

The afternoon session will focus on repository performance and uncertainties in the natural barrier system. Presentations will include a performance assessment view of the natural barriers, the unsaturated zone expert elicitation project, infiltration and the unsaturated zone model, the views of outside experts on the elicitation process, and lessons learned from expert elicitation.

On Thursday, June 26, presentations on the natural barrier system will continue. Subjects include saturated zone flow and transport, projected plans and costs of site-characterization work through license application, performance confirmation after licensing, development of projected costs for repository construction and operation, the east-west tunnel crossing the potential repository block, and other scientific activities at Yucca Mountain.

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Ample time is scheduled for questions and comments from the public. To ensure that everyone wishing to speak is provided time to do so, the Board encourages those who have comments to sign the *Public Comment Register*, which will be located at the sign-in table. Although a speaking time limit may have to be set, written comments of any length may be submitted for the record.

Transcripts of the meeting will be available via e-mail, on computer disk, or on a library-loan basis in paper format from Davonya Barnes, Board staff, beginning July 24, 1997. For more information, contact Frank Randall, External Affairs, (PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS) 2300 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1300, Arlington, Virginia 22201-3367; (Tel) 703-235-4473; (Fax) 703-235-4495; (E-mail) [info@nwtrb.gov](mailto:info@nwtrb.gov).

The Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board was created by Congress in the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1987 to evaluate the technical and scientific validity of activities undertaken by the DOE in its program to manage the disposal of the nation's spent nuclear fuel and defense high-level waste.

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