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TO: Mr. Robert E. Browning, Director  
FROM: Paul T. Prestholt, Sr. On-Site Licensing Representative  
DATE: November 26, 1986  
SUBJECT: Newspaper Articles

Please find enclosed more information that appeared in our local newspaper that is of interest.

PTP:nan

WM Record File	WM Project _____
<u>102</u>	Docket No. _____
	PDR _____
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# Nuke waste site study funds sought

By Laura Wingard  
Review-Journal

The U.S. Department of Energy doesn't have the \$4.6 million in extra funds Nevada wants for technical studies on Yucca Mountain, one of three potential sites for the nation's first high-level nuclear waste repository, a federal official said Monday.

But Bob Loux, executive director of the state's Nuclear Projects Agen-

cy, contended Energy Department headquarters in Washington can find the money.

About \$100 million annually is left unspent in the department's budget, and those funds could be used, Loux said.

Don Vieth, director of the Energy Department's nuclear waste management project office in Las Vegas, said the only way the state's request could

be met is if he takes money out of his \$117.2 million budget for the Yucca Mountain project.

If he does that, Vieth said, he will have to lay off workers in Las Vegas and at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

Vieth and Loux made their remarks to the legislative Committee on High-Level Radioactive Waste, which was meeting at McCarran In-

ternational Airport.

Despite Vieth's assertions, the committee believed the additional funds could be found.

"Perhaps you can look at your budget a little closer and help us out," said State Sen. Thomas Hick-ey, D-North Las Vegas, chairman of the committee.

But Vieth said congressional cuts hit the nuclear waste repository bud-

get hard. The budget for 1987 "start- ed out in reasonably good shape and wound up in disastrous shape," he said.

Vieth had originally sought \$175.5 million for the Nevada program, with \$5.6 million reserved for Loux's office. But Congress, upset with the Energy Department's handling of the program, cut the budget for Vieth's office to \$117.2 million.

Vieth said he didn't reduce \$5.6 million Loux first sought in February despite the cut. However, Vieth said he balked at Loux's re- quest last month to increase the 1987 budget to \$10.2 million.

"The request is coming late and it's putting me between a rock and hard spot," he said.

But Loux said the search for a  
Please see YUCCA/5B

## Yucca

From 1B

repository has changed dramatically since February when he submitted his budget request to Vieth. Loux's office is funded by a federal grant.

In May, the Energy Department officially designated Yucca Mountain in Nye County about 100 miles northwest of Las Vegas as one of three possibilities to hold the estimated 70,000 tons of spent nuclear fuel collected at the nation's nuclear power plants.

The other two sites are in Deaf Smith County, Texas, and Hanford, Wash.

Furthermore, Loux said, a federal court ruled after February that Nevada had the right to do independent technical studies on the choice of Yucca Mountain to confirm the re- search being done by the Energy De- partment.

Based on these two factors, Loux has increased his budget requests from \$5.6 million to \$10.2 million in 1987, from \$6.3 million to \$11.6 mil-

lion in 1988 and from \$7.9 million to \$13 million in 1989.

If the federal government rejects Nevada's request to increase the 1987 budget, Loux said the state will have to consider taking the Energy Department to court. But, he said, he believes the dispute can be worked out without suing the federal govern- ment.

A court battle could delay the ex- tra state funding for more than a year, Loux said.

## Copper eyed for nuke site

Associated Press

TUCSON, Ariz. — The federal government said it may find a new use for copper — storing nuclear waste, an Arizona congressman says.

Two years ago, Democratic Rep. Morris Udall asked the U.S. Department of Energy to find out if copper would be a suitable metal for making containers used to store nuclear waste.

The government has included cop- per in studies on the storage of nucle- ar waste, and a recent report indicat- ed that copper might be good for making the canisters. More study in- volving different metals was pending in the matter, however, a statement released by Udall said.

"This is by no means a panacea for the copper industry," Udall said, "and I don't mean to pass it off as such. But it is a small victory," he said.

"If I can help find new uses for copper and at the same time help solve our nuclear waste problems in this country, I will feel that I've ac- complished a lot," Udall said.

Udall said that if copper becomes the metal of choice for nuclear waste canisters, from 30,000 to 100,000 tons could be used for that purpose over the next quarter century.