

OCRWM Bulletin

August 20, 1986

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United States Department of Energy
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
Washington, D.C. 20585

IN THIS ISSUE...

	<u>Page</u>
Planning for Site Characterization	2
Preliminary Draft of Financial Assistance Guidelines Circulated for Review	4
Other Program Items:	
Oral Arguments Presented on Monitored Retrievable Storage Litigation	6
Information Services Directory Published	6
Currently Scheduled OCRWM Short-Term Program Milestones	7
Federal Register Action Items Relating to OCRWM	7
Selected Events Calendar	8
New Publications and Documents	9

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For further information about the national program, write to: Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, U.S. Department of Energy, Mail Stop RW-40, Washington, D.C., 20585; phone (202) 252-5722.

OCRWM Bulletin

PLANNING FOR SITE CHARACTERIZATION

The Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (NWPA) requires the Department of Energy (DOE) to conduct a site characterization program, including the construction of exploratory shafts for at least three candidate sites. The NWPA also requires that, before beginning shaft construction at any site, DOE prepare a site characterization plan (SCP) for that site.

Now that the Environmental Assessments have been published, and the President has approved the recommendation of three sites for characterization (see OCRWM Bulletin, June 1986), DOE's siting program is being focused on the preparation of SCPs for the three candidate sites for the first repository. The SCPs are also required by regulations promulgated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in 10 Code of Federal Regulations Part 60, "Disposal of High-Level Radioactive Wastes in Geologic Repositories".

The site characterization effort is organized according to a series of geologic, hydrologic, geochemical, seismotec-

tonic, paleoclimatological, and meteorological investigations. The investigations are expected to take about five years to complete. The basic purposes of the SCP are to:

- Describe the site, and the preliminary designs of a repository and waste package appropriate to the site in sufficient detail so that the affected parties can fully understand the basis for the planned site characterization program.
- Identify the uncertainties and limitations on the site- and design-related information developed during the site screening; to identify the issues to be resolved during the site characterization and the information needed to resolve the issues; and to present the strategy for resolving the issues, including the site suitability findings required by the siting guidelines.
- Describe work plans needed to resolve outstanding issues, reduce uncertainties in the data, and make required site suitability findings in terms of the siting guidelines.

OCRWM Bulletin

The DOE must submit each SCP to the NRC, to the Governor and legislature of the State where the candidate site is located, and to the governing body of any affected Indian Tribe on whose reservation the candidate site is located. In addition, DOE must make the plans available to the public and hold public hearings in the vicinity of the candidate site to inform residents of the plan and to receive their comments.

The NWPA requires DOE to conduct its site characterization activities in a manner that minimizes, to the extent practicable, any significant adverse environmental impact. The DOE will develop and implement monitoring and mitigation plans that will focus on those site characterization activities that DOE determines have a potential for a significant adverse impact. The determination by DOE of these potential impacts will be based on the Environmental Assessments for each site, review of the SCPs, and consultation with the affected States and Indian Tribes. Monitoring and mitigation plans will be developed in consultation with the affected States and Indian Tribes.

During site characterization,

DOE will issue progress reports not less than once every six months to the NRC, as well as to the Governor and legislature of the State where the candidate site is located, and to the governing body of any affected Indian Tribe on whose reservation the candidate site is located. The report will cover the nature and extent of site characterization activities, the information developed, and the progress of waste form and waste package research and development. In addition, information will be provided on new issues identified, plans for additional studies to resolve new issues, the identification of decision points reached, and modifications to schedules where appropriate. The reports will also describe progress in developing the repository design.

After completing site characterization and related activities required by NWPA, the Secretary of Energy will recommend to the President the first site to be developed as a repository. This recommendation will be accompanied by an environmental impact statement, prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act as modified by NWPA.

OCRWM Bulletin

PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
POLICY GUIDELINES CIRCULATED FOR REVIEW

A preliminary draft of the Financial Assistance Policy Guidelines has been sent to the States and Indian Tribes for review. Comments have been requested prior to issuing the Guidelines for formal comment.

The purpose of these financial assistance policy guidelines is to provide program-wide general policies and procedures for the award and administration of grants and payments authorized by the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (NWPA). These guidelines apply only to the grants and payments that are related to the NWPA and do not include procedures for other financial instruments such as cooperative agreements or contracts.

The NWPA provides for three distinct types of financial assistance: participation grants, mitigation assistance, and payments equal to taxes. As appropriate, such financial assistance may be provided to the following eligible recipients: 1) States; 2) affected Indian Tribes; and 3) units of local government.

The guidelines identify the types of recipients and program activities that are eligible for funding under the grant and payment provisions of the NWPA, and describe the nature and purpose of grants and payments available to the different types of recipients. The guidelines apply to new grants, the renewal or continuation of existing grants; and payments made pursuant to the NWPA.

The policy of OCRWM in providing financial assistance to the eligible recipients is to:

- 1) Comply with the NWPA and other law.
- 2) Ensure consistency in the application of the grant and payment provisions of the NWPA.
- 3) Treat all eligible grant recipients fairly and equitably during award, administration, and termination of the financial assistance instruments.
- 4) Treat all eligible payment recipients fairly and equitably consistent with applicable

OCRWM Bulletin

State, affected Indian Tribe, and local government statutes, regulations, treaties, and ordinances.

5) Incorporate a high degree of fiscal responsibility in the award, payment, and administration of grants and payments to eligible recipients and ensure that accounting integrity is maintained.

6) Ensure that fiscal constraints and cost control in

the award and administration of grants is fully considered.

7) Develop and maintain a system for the award of grants that balances the individual and collective needs of the recipients with the objectives of OCRWM.

8) Process grant and payment requests as expeditiously as possible to facilitate participation in the program by eligible parties.

OCRWM Bulletin

OTHER PROGRAM ITEMS

Oral Arguments Presented on Monitored Retrievable Storage Litigation

The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati heard oral arguments on July 24 on the lawsuit filed by Tennessee which enjoined the Secretary from submitting the Monitored Retrievable Storage (MRS) proposal to Congress.

Both parties presented argu-

ments, and responded to questions concerning the issues of court jurisdiction and the timing of the applicability of consultation and cooperation requirements to an MRS program. A decision is expected from the three judge panel sometime during the next two or three months.

Information Services Directory Published

In November 1985, OCRWM issued a draft Information Services Directory and received a number of suggestions that were incorporated into the current edition of the Directory. (See New Publications and Documents, page 9).

Chapter I of the Directory provides a listing of sources that provide current OCRWM program information. These include the OCRWM Bulletin, the Electronic Bulletin Board (INFOLINK), and periodic publications produced by OCRWM and the Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Scientific and Technical Information. Chapter II provides a directory of OCRWM and DOE technical information, including computerized data bases and other resources. Chapter III is an index of OCRWM Headquarters and Project

Office contacts, as well as State and Indian Tribe contacts. Chapter IV contains a list of Congressional Committees and Subcommittees that have jurisdiction over various components of the civilian radioactive waste management program. Chapter V lists the DOE reading rooms, the DOE information offices, and the public libraries that are on one or more of DOE's mailing lists.

OCRWM intends to update the Directory regularly, and suggestions and comments will continue to be appreciated. They should be directed to:

U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Civilian Radioactive
Waste Management
Office of Policy and Outreach
Information Services Division
(RW-43)
Washington, D.C. 20585

OCRWM Bulletin

CURRENTLY SCHEDULED OCRWM SHORT-TERM PROGRAM MILESTONES

8/86	Issue OCRWM Safety Plan.
8/86	Issue Federal Register Notice on defense waste fee.
8/86	Issue announcement of Licensing Support System design and implementation procurement to Commerce Business Daily.
9/86	Issue annual update of Spent Fuel Storage Requirements Report.
9/86	Complete annual OCRWM Quality Assurance Assessment.

FEDERAL REGISTER ACTION ITEMS RELATING TO OCRWM

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Citation</u>	<u>Comment Period</u> <u>Expiration Date</u>
<u>Licensing requirements for a monitored retrievable storage (MRS) facility.</u> - The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing to add language to its regulations to provide for licensing an MRS in accordance with the requirements of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982.	51 FR 19106	The comment period will expire August 25, 1986. Mail written comments to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Attention: Docketing and Service Branch, Washington D.C. 20555..

August 20, 1986

OCRWM Bulletin

SELECTED EVENTS CALENDAR

- September 7-12 Second International Conference on Radioactive Waste Management, Winnipeg, Canada. Contact Wanda Klimkiewicz (202) 252-6770.
- September 9-11 Environmental Coordinating Group Meeting, Washington, D.C. Contact Susan Peterson (202) 252-4957.
- September 14-17 American Nuclear Society International Conference on Low-Level, Intermediate, and High-Level Waste Management, Niagara Falls, NY. Contact John Knabenschuh (716) 942-4295.
- September 16-18 Institutional/Socioeconomic Coordination Group Meeting, Denver, CO. Contact Barry Gale (202) 252-1116.
- September 24 Western Legislative Conference, High-Level Waste Subcommittee Meeting, Colorado Springs, CO. Contact Patty Spangler (415) 986-3760.
- October 19-22 Atomic Industrial Forum Meeting on High-Level Waste Business -- Transportation, Storage and Disposal, Charleston, SC. Contact Patrice Boulanger (301) 654-9260.
- October 22-23 Quality Assurance Coordinating Group Meeting Columbus, OH. Contact Carl Newton (202) 252-9300.

For details on Department of Energy/Nuclear Regulatory Commission meetings call (800) 368-2235 for a recorded message. In Maryland, call (800) 492-4610.

A telephone recording service has been established for the announcement of upcoming meetings related to the waste management program of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The number is (1/800) 368-5642, Ext. 79002. Washington D.C. residents should call 427-9002.

For information on meetings and events occurring between issues of the OCRWM Bulletin use OCRWM INFOLINK, an Electronic Bulletin Board that can be accessed through a standard computer communications capability on (202) 252-9359 or call Neal Duncan, (202) 252-5722.

OCRWM Bulletin

NEW PUBLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTS

Information Services Directory

DOE/RW-0038
End of
August 1986

The Directory identifies sources of available program information including the OCRWM Electronic Bulletin Board (INFOLINK) and the periodic publications produced by OCRWM and by the Department of Energy's Office of Scientific and Technical Information. For copies, contact the Department of Energy, OCRWM, Office of Policy and Outreach, RW-43, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington D.C. 20585.

Request for Proposal for From-Reactor Casks

DE-RP07-86-
ID12625

The Request for Proposal (RFP) is part of a procurement action designated as Phase I, Initiative I in the Transportation Business Plan. A Comment Response Document is also available that discusses the comments received from 17 organizations that submitted written comments on the draft RFP. For copies of these documents, contact Department of Energy, Idaho Operations Office, Contracts Management Division, 785 Department of Energy Place, Idaho Falls, ID 83402, Attention: Kent Hastings or call (208) 526-1510.