



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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ATOMIC SAFETY AND LICENSING BOARD SCHEDULES HEARINGS ON PROPOSED URANIUM ENRICHMENT PLANT IN NEW MEXICO

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) will begin evidentiary hearings Feb. 7 in Hobbs, N.M., on a proposed uranium enrichment plant to be built in Lea County. Saturday, Feb. 12, will be set aside for members of the public to make brief statements.

During the hearings, the ASLB will hear evidence on four environmental contentions regarding the proposed National Enrichment Facility to be built by Louisiana Energy Services near Eunice, N.M. These contentions concern impacts on ground and surface water, water supplies, waste storage and the need for the facility.

Members of the Licensing Board are G. Paul Bollwerk, III, Chairman; Dr. Paul B. Abramson and Dr. Charles N. Kelber.

The evidentiary hearings will begin at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 7, and continue daily until concluded. They will be held at the Lea County Event Center, 5101 Lovington Highway, Hobbs, N.M. While these hearings will be open to the public, parts of the sessions regarding each of the contentions may be closed due to discussions that may involve sensitive information.

On Saturday, Feb. 12, from 10:00 a.m. to noon the ASLB will convene at the Eunice Community Center, 1115 Avenue I, in Eunice, N.M., to hear statements from the public. A second session will be held from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., if there is sufficient interest. Members of the public who are not a party or representative of a party to the hearings may make oral statements no longer than five minutes regarding the environmental contentions on the proposed facility.

Persons wishing to speak at the Feb. 12 sessions are strongly advised to register in advance both with the NRC Secretary and with the Board. Based on registrations received by noon EST on Feb. 3, the Board may decide whether Saturday sessions will be held.

Written requests to make oral statements at the Feb. 12 sessions should be submitted to Office of the Secretary, Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff, by fax to (301) 415-1101, or e-mailed to hearingdocket@nrc.gov. Requests should also be sent to the Board by fax to (301) 415-5599, or e-mail to ksv@nrc.gov and gpb@nrc.gov.

Members of the public attending any of the ASLB sessions are strongly advised to arrive early to allow time to pass through any security measures that may be employed. Attendees are also requested not to bring any unnecessary hand-carried items, such as packages, briefcases, backpacks or other items that may need to be examined individually. During the sessions, signs no larger than 18" by 18" will be permitted, but may not be attached to sticks, held up, or moved about in the rooms.

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