



NRC NEWS

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NRC CREATES THREE BOARDS TO CONSIDER CONTENTIONS IN YUCCA MOUNTAIN HEARING

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel has established three boards to consider admissibility of contentions in the adjudicatory hearing over the geologic high-level nuclear waste repository proposed for Yucca Mountain, Nev.

Each board consists of three judges, two with legal expertise and one with technical expertise. Combined, the boards will consider and rule upon the admissibility of approximately 320 proposed contentions filed by 12 petitioners. These boards will consider only the standing of the petitioners and the admissibility of the contentions; additional boards will be established to rule on any contentions that are admitted for a hearing.

Procedures for the standing and admissibility phase of the hearing were set out in an ASLB order issued today. Petitioners will file their pleadings, responses and replies with all three boards, which will then allocate the contentions for consideration. The boards expect to hold oral arguments on standing and admissibility sometime this spring at the NRC's Las Vegas Hearing Facility.

The Department of Energy submitted its application for the Yucca Mountain repository on June 3, 2008. The NRC staff docketed the application Sept. 8. A notice of opportunity to request a hearing was published in the *Federal Register* on Oct. 22, with petitions filed in December.

Petitioners include the states of Nevada and California, several Nevada counties, and Native American tribal groups. Two other Nevada counties filed requests to participate as interested government bodies.

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