

ECA Update March 1, 2016

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Upcoming Events

March 2016

01

House Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development Appropriations Hearing
"Budget Hearing - Department of Energy"
(9:30 AM)
[Visit website.](#)

March 2016

01

House Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development Appropriations Hearing
"Budget Hearing - Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration, Weapons and Activities and Nuclear Nonproliferation and

The Office of Inspector General has issued a report titled "Issues Management at the Los Alamos National Laboratory," (DOE-OIG-16-07).

This report is now available for viewing and can be accessed [here](#).

Landfill site undecided, but early design proceeds

Knox Blogs

February 29, 2016

[LINK](#)

There have been concerns raised about the Department of Energy's proposed new landfill for nuclear cleanup wastes in Oak Ridge, especially DOE's preferred location — adjacent to the existing disposal site known as the Environmental Management Waste Management Facility (shown in photo).[landfill-thumb-400x265-12706.jpg](#)

Because of questions by environmental regulators and local stakeholders, DOE is evaluating a number of sites on the government's Oak Ridge reservation while continuing to emphasize the value of disposing of the hazardous and radioactive wastes in Oak Ridge rather than shipping them to commercial sites elsewhere.

Even with the siting decision still up in the air, DOE's cleanup contractor — URS-CH2M Oak Ridge — is continuing work on design concepts for the landfill to be called Environmental Management Disposal Facility.

"As you're aware, DOE and the regulators are in the process of evaluating a number of sites on the Oak Ridge Reservation that may be suitable for a disposal facility, if the on-site option is chosen," UCOR spokeswoman Anne Smith said.

"UCOR, with support from its parent companies, is in the process of completing the conceptual design of the facility," Smith said. "A majority of the work we have done is site-generic, and can be used no matter which on-

Naval Reactors"

(1:30 PM)

[Visit website.](#)

March 2016

02

House Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development Appropriations Hearing
"Budget Hearing - Department of Energy, Applied Energy"

(10:30 AM)

[Visit website.](#)

March 2016

03

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Hearing
"Hearing to examine the Department of Energy's budget request for Fiscal Year 2017"

(10:00 AM)

[Visit website.](#)

August 2016

site location is selected. However, we will not begin preliminary design until a decision is made on whether or not to construct additional on-site disposal, and the preferred location is selected.”

House GOP wants probe into Yucca Mountain

The Hill

February 29, 2016

[LINK](#)

House Republicans are asking Congress’ watchdog agency to investigate whether the Energy Department has the ability to complete a key step toward establishing a nuclear waste facility.

House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-Mich.) and Rep. John Shimkus (R-Ill.), who leads the environment subcommittee on the panel, are worried that the Energy Department might not be able to complete its formal application to establish the Yucca Mountain repository.

The Obama administration moved in 2009 to stop the formal process of applying to build the facility to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and Congress stopped appropriating funds for the application.

But with numerous nuclear power plants closing or slated to close soon, Upton and Shimkus want to know what resources the Energy Department has in place for if it wants to restart the process.

“Should Congress appropriate additional funding to complete the Yucca Mountain [application], DOE must ... defend the [application] during the NRC’s review process,” they wrote Monday. “In doing so, DOE would have to utilize contract support and have an organization to manage the activities.”

Upton and Shimkus also cited for the argument the legal challenges to an NRC regulation allowing long-term storage of some nuclear waste at nuclear

9-10

Third Annual
Intermountain
Energy Summit
Idaho Falls, ID
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September 2016

14-15

DOE National Cleanup
Workshop
Hilton Alexandria Mark
Center
Alexandria, VA
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power plant sites, which, if overturned, would increase the pressure to build Yucca.

Committee Leaders Send Letter to Nonpartisan Watchdog On DOE Yucca Mountain Restart Plans

House Energy and Commerce Committee

WASHINGTON, DC – Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI) and Environment and the Economy Subcommittee Chairman John Shimkus (R-IL) today sent a [letter](#) to the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) asking the nonpartisan watchdog to assess the Department of Energy’s (DOE) ability to complete the Yucca Mountain License Application (LA).

The leaders write, “Recent announcements that some reactors will enter the decommissioning process prior to the expiration of their operating licenses and ongoing legal challenges to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission’s (NRC) ‘continued storage rule,’ make it urgent to reconstitute the Federal nuclear waste disposal program as established in the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (NWPA).”

The members pose a series of six questions to aid the committee in gaining a better understanding of DOE’s federal nuclear waste disposal program.

1. Does DOE have a restart plan to complete the review of the Yucca Mountain LA? If so, does the plan comply with all aspects of the NWPA? If not, what are the gaps?
2. What is the current status and availability of the contracts and contractors to support the licensing and program restart?
3. What specific contracting and DOE personnel remain to assist in the completion of the LA?

4. Do the contractor(s) have sufficient funding available for timely and effective restart of their needed functions? If so, are funds adequate to enable completion of the LA review process? If not, what funding is needed and what are the cost and schedule estimates for funding?
5. What plans or instructions are in place to find, and use, the Yucca Mountain records which were archived during the shutdown process?
6. Does the NRC have the necessary expertise and organization in place to complete its review of the Yucca Mountain LA?

To read the letter online, click [here](#).

Kurion System Gives Nuclear Site Operators 'New Tool' to Manage Tritium

Environmental Leader

February 29, 2016

[LINK](#)

Nuclear waste cleanup firm Kurion today announced it has completed construction and testing of a prototype system that removes tritium from contaminated water.

Kurion says the Modular Detritiation System (MDS) is a cost-effective system to manage tritium and eliminate the release of tritiated water to the environment.

Water treatment systems at nuclear sites remove many contaminating isotopes, leaving tritium, a form of hydrogen that becomes part of the water molecule itself, forming tritiated water. As a result, tritiated water has traditionally been difficult and expensive to treat and can spread easily if it escapes into the environment.

Kurion says its prototype MDS offers operators of nuclear sites a new tool for managing tritium, including the ability to reduce or recycle their water to eliminate the need to release tritiated water into the environment.

The MDS has completed a cold and hot commissioning phase.

The company says its system is the world's first to process large volumes of light water across a range of concentrations to remove tritium contamination and allows for the recycling or clean release of reactor cooling water for light water reactors.

The industrial process of removing tritium from water has historically focused on cleaning highly contaminated "heavy water" for recycling back into nuclear reactors. However, this technology is expensive for use with light water reactors. The Kurion MDS builds upon heavy water systems and makes advances in throughput and efficiency for light water detritiation.

The new system will use a full-scale catalytic exchange column.

Kurion says it is currently in discussions with a number of customers in the US and abroad to introduce its mature MDS technology. Interest ranges across both operating and decommissioning plants.

Earlier this month Veolia, the Paris-based waste and water giant, bought Kurion for \$350 million.

The new business will target the nuclear sector — facilities and research centers that are in operation or being decommissioned — as well as to the oil industry and the pharmaceuticals industry.