

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT SUPPORTS EXPANDED USE OF NEVADA TEST SITE

From US Dept. of Energy

■(WASHINGTON) U.S. Secretary of Energy Hazel R. O'Leary last week announced completion of an analysis of the environmental impacts of current and future activities at the 1,350-square-mile Nevada Test Site and off-site locations in the state of Nevada. Prepared over a 23-month period that included broad public participation, the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) identifies the Department's preferred alternative: expanded use of the test site for a variety of civilian and defense activities. The Department received extensive comments on the draft EIS from the state of Nevada, relevant federal agencies and other stakeholders, and those comments are addressed in the final document.

In issuing the EIS, Secretary O'Leary said, "The Nevada Test Site is a unique and valuable resource. We are proud of its important contribution to U.S. national security over five decades. This comprehensive, sitewide environmental impact statement will guide use of the site well into the next century."

The preferred alternative (i.e., expanded use) represents a continuation of current Nevada Test Site activities as well as a diversification and expansion of defense and non-defense operations. Under this preferred alternative, defense activities would include science-based stockpile stewardship experiments and operations to maintain the safety and reliability of the nuclear stockpile, including subcritical experiments consistent with the recently endorsed Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. No immediate impact to employment is expected. Other environmental studies are underway for other DOE sites and projects, and if their outcomes result in new projects being moved to the Nevada Test Site, more jobs could be created there.

Non-defense uses include

- A Solar Enterprise Zone — Facilities could include a photovoltaic (PV) power tower or parabolic dish systems, capable of generating as much as 1,000 megawatts of electricity.
- A Spill Test Facility — An important tool used for the simulation and analysis of "accidental release" of toxic, hazardous chemicals, the facility would also be the ideal venue for training in emergency response to commercial chemical and gaseous spills.
- An Environmental Management and Technology Development Program — a research and development program to create

new technologies for landfill stabilization, mixed waste characterization and other processes. The project's aim would be to unite the top talents of DOE with the international scientific community in an effort to speed the progress of environmental clean up and restoration of the nuclear weapons sites.

- A National Environmental Research Park — research into ecosystem preservation, including habitat reclamation, hydrogeologic systems, and remediation.

In the area of waste management, the site would strive for continuous improvement through the development and use of cutting-edge, environmentally friendly technologies and more efficient processes.

The preferred option also has activities including educational tours that would allow the public to see firsthand some of the history and impacts of past nuclear testing.

In order to optimize the test site's capabilities, other public agencies and private

industries would be able to conduct compatible research at the Nevada Test Site. The sharing of intellectual and physical resources would create an ideal atmosphere for discovery and innovative science. This model research and development cooperative would serve the public interest by bridging defense and civilian interests in an economically sustainable and environmentally sound manner.

Copies of the Nevada Test Site (NTS) Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is being distributed to interested parties. Copies of the summary, or the entire EIS, are available by writing to the Public Affairs and Information Office, U.S. Department of Energy, Nevada Operations Office, PO Box 98518, Las Vegas, NV 89193-8518 or by calling the NTS/EIS Hotline at 1-800/405-1140 or 702/295-4652.

LABOR SECRETARY UNVEILS WORKPLACE FIRE SAFETY TIPS

From US Dept. of Labor

■(WASHINGTON) Fire safety becomes everyone's job at a worksite, Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich said this week, as he unveiled a list of workplace fire safety tips in observation of National Fire Prevention Week. Workplace fires and explosions kill 200 and injure more than 5,000 workers each year. In 1995, more than 75,000 workplace fires cost businesses more than \$2.3 billion.

"Fires wreak havoc among workers and their families and destroy thousands of businesses each year, putting people out of work and severely impacting their livelihoods," Reich said. "The human and financial toll underscores the serious nature of workplace fires."

"There is a long and tragic history of workplace fires in this country," Reich said. "One of the most notable was the 1911 fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City, in which nearly 150 women and young girls died because of locked fire exits and inadequate fire extinguishing systems. That tragedy helped put basic workplace safety and health considerations on the national agenda."

Reich urged employers to survey their workplaces to determine whether they have adequate readily accessible fire exits, fire alarm systems, the proper number and types of fire extinguishers, proper and rehearsed fire evacuation plans.

Under Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations, em-

ployees have the right to complain to OSHA about fire hazards in their workplaces. If employees request it, OSHA will keep their identities confidential to avoid the possibility of reprisals by their employers.

Fire safety tips:

- Eliminate Fire Hazards: Keep workspaces free of waste paper and other combustibles, replace damaged electrical cords and avoiding overloaded circuits.
- Prepare for Emergencies: Make sure all smoke detectors work, knowing who to call in an emergency and participating in fire drills.
- Report Fires and Emergencies Promptly: Sounding the fire alarm and calling the fire department.
- Evacuate Safely: Leaving the area quickly in an emergency, using stairs instead of the elevator, and helping your coworkers.

A single free copy of an OSHA Program Highlight on Workplace Fire Safety and a copy of OSHA Booklet 3088, "How to Prepare for Workplace Emergencies," may be obtained by sending a self-addressed label to the U.S. Department of Labor, OSHA/OSHA Publications, PO Box 37535, Washington DC 20013-7535. Telephone 202/219-4667, fax 202/219-9266.

"Statistics are no substitute for judgement."

Henry Clay