



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) will begin an evidentiary hearing March 6 in Hobbs, N.M., on a proposed uranium enrichment plant to be built in Lea County. In addition, the Board will hold special sessions March 5 and March 6 to allow members of the public to make brief statements.

During the evidentiary hearing, the ASLB will receive testimony and exhibits in the "mandatory hearing" portion of the adjudication concerning the proposed National Enrichment Facility to be built by Louisiana Energy Services near Eunice, N.M. This hearing will concern safety and environmental matters other than those that were raised by intervening parties and are currently being litigated in a separate "contested" hearing. LES and the NRC staff will be parties in the mandatory hearing.

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

The evidentiary hearing will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, March 6, and will continue daily until completed. Hearing sessions will be held at the New Mexico Junior College, Moran Building Multi-Purpose Room, 5317 Lovington Highway, in Hobbs. Portions of these hearing sessions may be closed to the public to allow discussion of protected information.

On Sunday, March 5, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., and on Monday, March 6, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., the Board will convene at the same location to hear statements from the public. Members of the public who are not parties or representatives of parties in the hearings may make oral statements no longer than five minutes on matters relating to the LES proceeding.

Persons wishing to make oral statements at either the March 5 or March 6 evening session should send a written request by February 22, 2006, to Office of the Secretary, Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001; by fax to (301) 415-1101; or by e-mail to hearingdocket@nrc.gov. Requests should also be sent to the ASLB by fax to (301) 415-5599 or by e-mail to emp1@nrc.gov and gpb@nrc.gov. Depending on the number of requests to speak received by Feb. 22, the Board may decide to cancel one or both of the public statement sessions.

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