nwmo
NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION
SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION DES DÉCHETS NUCLÉAIRES

the nwmo news

Vol.2, Issue 3 | OCT 2004

What's Inside...

LATEST LEARNING SHARED: NEW DISCUSSION DOCUMENT p.01/02

NWMO COAST-TO-COAST: INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION p.01/04

QUIRKS AND QUARKS: DISPOSAL DISCUSSION p.02

ASSESSING THE OPTIONS: TRADE-OFFS p.03

RESPONSIBLE ACTION: NWMO "LISTENS AND LEARNS" p.03

FUNDY FISHERMAN'S DAY: OUR HISTORY, OUR HERITAGE p.04

NWMO INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION SCHEDULE p.04

Keep up to date @

www.NWMO.ca

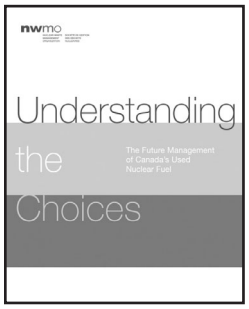
Join the dialogue today!

LATEST LEARNING SHARED

NEW DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

The NWMO has released its second milestone discussion document. *Understanding the Choices* arrives mid-way in the NWMO study. It elaborates on the management options being considered, outlines how the framework to assess them has evolved, and presents a preliminary comparison for public discussion.

After extensive engagement with stakeholders, experts and the public, and the preliminary assessment by a multi-disciplinary team, the NWMO says it is unlikely that a single technical method will perfectly address the values and objectives Canadians have said are important for managing used nuclear fuel. Trade-offs will have to be made. However, there is broad agreement on some fundamental ideas.



Discussion Document 2 Understanding the Choices

"No matter how difficult the dialogue, inaction is not acceptable to Canadians," said Elizabeth Dowdeswell, NWMO president. "People have told us clearly that they are prepared to take responsibility for waste that has been generated in meeting their energy demands. But, they don't want to close down options for future generations to change

continued on page 2...

NWMO COAST-TO-COAST

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

The NWMO has undertaken a national engagement program to discuss *Understanding the Choices*. In late September, teams were dispatched to both coasts to launch a series of Information and Discussion Sessions that will be held in more than 30 communities in every province and territory before winding up in mid-December. (see Calendar, p. 4)

The visits are structured to introduce the NWMO, build awareness and understanding of used nuclear fuel management, and to invite public input, particularly on the second discussion document. Information sessions in each locale are followed by facilitated

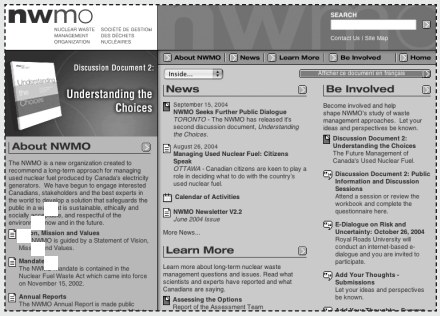


Information Session: Pickering

discussions where people are invited to review and comment on the attributes of the different nuclear waste management approaches and the framework being proposed to compare them.

continued on page 4...

WWW.NWMO.CA BUSY SITE



www.nwmo.ca

Increasingly the NWMO website is becoming a venue of choice for people wanting to learn about and become involved in the discussion of long-term nuclear waste management in Canada.

Month-over-month traffic continues to expand, and year-over-year visits are growing by leaps and bounds. The website recorded a record 10,294 visits by 3535 individuals in September, 2004. That more than tripled the 3070 visits by 1343 people a year earlier.

The Background Papers section of the website has long been a favourite destination although the busiest page in a single month was the Calendar of Activities. (www.nwmo.ca/calendar) It was accessed by 551 visitors in September shortly after the NWMO fall engagement program was announced.

Other popular pages in recent weeks have been the second discussion document, *Understanding the Choices* (www.nwmo.ca/understandingthechoices), and the CPRN report on the National Citizen's Dialogue (www.nwmo.ca/canadianvalues).

The website offers excellent opportunities for input into the NWMO study. Visitors can choose from simple polls to deliberative surveys and full submissions. E-dialogues are also available. ■

...continued from page 1

LATEST LEARNING SHARED

course if there are beneficial technical advances or shifting societal expectations."

Other preliminary findings reported in the discussion document include: people want to be kept informed and involved in decision-making at key points throughout the implementation of any management approach; they expect governments and industry to be transparent about the ongoing care of used fuel; and they say affected communities and regions must be kept informed and engaged on decisions impacting them.

Having narrowed the number of approaches it will study, the NWMO says there is still much work to be done before it can complete its assessment and develop its recommendations. The organization is inviting Canadians to comment on the methodology it is proposing to compare various management approaches and to consider the strengths and limitations of the different options. An active public engagement campaign is underway, including a series of information and dialogue sessions across Canada. (see Information and Discussion, p. 1) ■

QUIRKS AND QUARKS

DISPOSAL DISCUSSION

Nuclear waste management, a subject generally below the radar of major print and broadcast news outlets, caught national attention in mid-September. It was a featured story on Quirks and Quarks. The CBC science digest explored some of the issues raised by the idea of burying used fuel in a geological repository.

David Shoesmith and Lawrence Johnson, scientists who have both worked on a plan for developing a repository, argued in favour of geological disposal. "Society is not that stable, but geology is," maintained Dr. Johnson.

An opposing view came from Norm Rubin, director of nuclear research at Energy Probe. "No serious thought has gone into giving our grand-kids a chance to undo this if it turns out badly," he argued.

NWMO President Elizabeth Dowdeswell was among those interviewed by program host Bob McDonald. "We want our cake and eat it too," she said, discussing some of the trade-offs that Canadians will have to consider. "For example, if security is the key objective, then burying it deep underground is probably the safest most secure place to put it. But, if you believe better technical methods will be available in the future, you might want the waste to be accessible, closer to the surface." she said.



Bob McDonald

The Quirks and Quarks program is archived on the CBC website and is also accessible by following links from the NWMO website. ■

Be Involved

The NWMO wants Canadians to become involved and help shape its study of nuclear waste management approaches. We're using electronic and face-to-face methods to dialogue with you and ensure your values and concerns are considered. Let your ideas and perspectives be known.

SUBSCRIBE TO NWMO E-MAIL LISTS

Visit **www.nwmo.ca**

ASSESSING THE OPTIONS

TRADE-OFFS

There is plenty to be learned from the report of the NWMO Assessment Team. As a complement to the publication of the second discussion document, *Assessing the Options* was also released in September. It includes the Assessment Team description of alternative approaches for long-term waste management, the assessment methodology being proposed to compare them, and a preliminary comparison for discussion.

The Team chose a multi-attribute utility analysis framework to conduct its preliminary assessment. "Any option is going to have a mix of good and bad points," said Team member William Leiss. "Because we must make trade-offs, the process we use must be as transparent as possible, so everyone can see all the steps in the reasoning."

After applying the framework, the Team observed that no one technical method perfectly addresses all of the values and objectives important to Canadians. An averaging of scores assigned by the multi-disciplinary members indicated that a deep geological repository is expected to perform better than the alternatives against the eight objectives identified to reflect the values and concerns of Canadians. But, not all Team members assessed each of the options on the objectives in exactly the same way. In fact the range of scores was quite wide in many instances. The Team also noted that the way in which an option is implemented is as important as the option itself.

"We want others to consider what we found and ask themselves if they might come to the same conclusions, or perhaps different conclusions, and if so, why," said Dr. Leiss. "We have confidence in our results. We want other citizens to have a similar confidence in their own thinking on these issues," added the Queen's University professor.

Since implementation of a management approach will stretch out over an extended period of time – regardless of what option is ultimately selected – the Assessment Team suggested it be developed in a staged, flexible manner. Doing so, they concluded, will provide for "new learning and new experience to be brought to bear on the difficult issue of choosing an approach that will enjoy a high degree of public acceptability."

Assessing the Options is available for download from the NWMO website: www.nwmo.ca/assessmentteamreport

RESPONSIBLE ACTION

NWMO "LISTENS AND LEARNS"



Judith Maxwell, Elizabeth Dowdeswell with Toronto Star's Peter Calamai

"Effective public policy is built on an understanding of what really matters to people," Elizabeth Dowdeswell told reporters in Ottawa at the release of *Responsible Action*, a report of the national citizen's dialogues held to identify key citizen values to guide decision-making on used nuclear fuel management.

The research project was carried out by the Canadian Policy Research Networks on behalf of the NWMO. Almost 500 people in 12 communities participated. They identified public safety and a desire to act now to protect current and future generations as overriding concerns. And they agreed on a set of values addressing how rights and responsibilities should be shared across generations, how decisions should be made, and who should be making them.

The project found that people want to take responsibility and act now on waste created generating electricity they have used. But they want to make it possible for future generations to revisit today's choices in the light of new knowledge and technologies.

Participants advocate a holistic approach to the challenge of managing used nuclear fuel. They support conserving energy use, exploiting alternative energy sources and fully assessing the costs and benefits of all types of energy.

They also want to receive the information they need to contribute to decision-making about used nuclear fuel. And they want an independent body, with expert and citizen representation, to see that information is provided and that government and industry do their part.

"We have listened and learned," said Ms. Dowdeswell. "Citizens have contributed important insights. The values they expressed will guide NWMO's further work and be reflected in our ultimate recommendations."

"Participants strongly endorsed the NWMO's engagement approach and see it as a model for future decision-making," said CPRN president Judith Maxwell.

the nwmo news

Vol.2, Issue 3 | OCT 2004

FUNDY FISHERMEN'S DAY
OUR HISTORY, OUR HERITAGE

Not even a last blast from Hurricane Charlie put a damper on festivities at the 2004 Fundy Fishermen's Day. More than 1000 people, many of them close neighbours to NB Power's Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station, others visiting from close by Saint John or as far away as Ontario and the United States, weren't deterred by the heavy morning rain from attending the annual celebration in Dipper Harbour, New Brunswick. By noon, the sky cleared and a full schedule of events, from dinghy races to a scallop shucking contest, was underway.



MLA Rick Doucet examines fuel bundle

The NWMO, one of several organizations providing information at the event, was well-received by festival-goers. Visitors welcomed the opportunity to learn more about the study to recommend a long-term nuclear waste management plan for Canada. Dozens of videos, discussion documents, newsletters and fact sheets were eagerly accepted by those who stopped by the NWMO booth. Many indicated an interest in contributing their views and signed up for ongoing updates.

...continued from page 1

NWMO COAST TO COAST

"While nuclear electricity production is limited to three provinces, the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act* is federal legislation and the Government of Canada will choose from among the options we study," said Elizabeth Dowdeswell, NWMO president. "It is therefore important that all interested Canadians are provided opportunities to reflect on the issue and offer their insights."

Although attendance at early sessions was light, interest was high among those who did attend. The NWMO will post summaries of sessions on its website. A full report of findings from the national engagement program will be published in early 2005. ■

THE NWMO IS HOSTING INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION SESSIONS IN EVERY REGION OF CANADA

LOCATION	INFORMATION SESSION	DISCUSSION SESSION	LOCATION	INFORMATION SESSION	DISCUSSION SESSION
Yellowknife, NWT	September 27 September 28	September 28	**Montreal, PQ**	November 1 November 2	December 1
St. John's, NL	September 27 September 28	September 28	**Clarington, ON**	November 1 November 2	December 7
Edmonton, AB	September 29 September 30	September 30	**Kingston, ON**	November 3 November 4	December 4
Goose Bay, NL	September 29 September 30	September 30	**Québec City, PQ**	November 3 November 4	December 6
Becancour, PQ	October 4 October 5	October 19	**Ottawa, ON**	November 8 November 9	December 9
Halifax, NS	October 6 October 7	October 7	**Charlottetown, PEI**	November 8 November 9	November 9
London, ON	October 6 October 7	November 30	**Pembroke, ON**	November 10	November 27
			Edmunston, NB	November 10	December 8
Whitehorse, YT	October 13 October 14	October 14	**Sudbury, ON**	November 15 November 16	December 14
Vancouver, BC	October 13 October 14	October 14	**Sept Iles, PQ**	November 15 November 16	November 25
Pickering, ON	October 18 October 19	December 6	**Timmins, ON**	November 17 November 18	December 13
Regina, SK	October 20 October 21	October 21	**Rivière-du-Loup, PQ**	November 17 November 18	December 2
Toronto, ON	October 20 October 21	December 1	**Pinawa, MB**	November 22 November 23	December 15
Musquash, NB	October 25 October 26	November 29	**Rouyn, PQ**	November 22 November 23	December 16
Winnipeg, MB	October 27 October 28	October 28	**Thunder Bay, ON**	November 24 November 25	December 14
Fredericton, NB	October 27 October 28	November 30	**Kenora, ON**	November 24 November 25	December 15
Huntsville, ON	November 1 November 2	December 2	**Iqaluit, NU**	December 7 December 8	December 8

NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

49 Jackes Avenue, First Floor • Toronto Ontario Canada • M4T 1E2 • **Tel:** 416.934.9814 **Toll Free:** 1.866.249.6966 (within Canada) **Fax:** 416.934.9526