



## **YANKEE ATOMIC ELECTRIC COMPANY**

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### **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Yankee Atomic CEO Meets with U.S. Energy Under Secretary to Expedite Yucca Mountain Recommendation**

**Rowe, Massachusetts, December 19, 2001** – Russ Mellor, president and CEO of Yankee Atomic Electric Company and Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company, today urged the Department of Energy Under (DOE) to make a favorable recommendation to the President for developing Yucca Mountain as a federal repository for used nuclear fuel and high-level waste.

Mellor and other members of the Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition met with U.S. Energy Under Secretary Card this morning to reiterate that the:

1. scientific evidence demonstrates the Yucca Mountain site is suitable for a repository;
2. that despite a contractual obligation to take responsibility for this waste, the government has let the nuclear waste disposal program languish for twenty years; and
3. that nationwide, electric consumers have paid more than \$19 billion dollars to the government to remove the waste.

As Chairman of the Decommissioning Plant Coalition, Mellor also represents the unique concerns of shutdown plants. He said that removing used fuel promptly and on a priority basis from these plants to a secure federal facility will reduce security concerns raised in the aftermath of September 11 by reducing the number of sites requiring protection. He also urged the DOE to expedite and assure that there is a transportation infrastructure in place to move the waste to a federal site.

*Russ Mellor's statement is attached*

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## **Statement by Russell Mellor**

President & CEO,  
Connecticut Yankee & Yankee Atomic  
&  
Chairman  
Decommissioning Plant Coalition

December 19, 2001

It is clear -- based on the conclusion of the public hearings process this past week in Nevada -- that the stage is set and the curtain is drawn with respect to the Yucca Mountain site suitability recommendation. Secretary Abraham faces an important decision, but the evidence is clear; we need to centrally locate spent fuel and we need to do it as soon as possible.

As President & CEO of two decommissioning plants in the Northeast and Chairman of the Decommissioning Plant Coalition, it is my hope that Secretary Abraham will act on this decision sooner rather than later. It is imperative -- given the Department's failure to meet its 1998 responsibility for spent fuel acceptance, growing taxpayer and ratepayer investment and emerging pressure emanating from September 11 concerns -- that the Secretary do everything in his power to meet the 2001 target for a Yucca Mountain suitability decision.

The best holiday gift that Secretary Abraham could give American energy consumers, electricity ratepayers, nuclear generators, and decommissioning plants is to exercise his statutory authority to trigger notification to the Nevada Governor and legislature that he intends to make a favorable recommendation to the President in 30 days as prescribed by the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

While spent nuclear fuel can be stored safely on-site, the ultimate and best solution is for the United States government to meet its statutory and legal obligation to remove the fuel from these sites on a priority basis to a secure federal facility. Used fuel can be more efficiently and cost effectively monitored and protected at a centralized location such as the remote Yucca Mountain desert site. In light of recent events, it now makes more sense than ever to remove the fuel on an expedited basis from decommissioning power plants sites to a secure federal protected facility.

We also encourage the Secretary to look at other specific actions, which we believe should be deployed in conjunction with a favorable, timely Yucca Mountain site recommendation, including

- Expediting Department of Energy (DOE) near-term actions to assure the transportation infrastructure is in place to move the used fuel and waste and
- Resolving outstanding fuel acceptance issues.