

A WASTE OWNER'S PERSPECTIVE ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE REPOSITORY SITING IN CANADA

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Abstract

When benchmarking radioactive waste repository siting across jurisdictions, both common themes and differences in choices made can be observed. In particular, national policies and regulations, scale of geography and volumes of wastes in the various radioactive waste hazard categories can play a significant part in ultimate decisions taken for the siting of repositories. In Canada, the Radioactive Waste Policy Framework provides for waste owners to be responsible for the full life-cycle management of radioactive wastes, including disposal. As a waste owner of the largest inventory of low level radioactive waste (LLW) in Canada, AECL is responsible for the safe long-term management and disposal of its waste, including historical low-level waste for which the Government of Canada has accepted responsibility. Canadian Nuclear Laboratories operates and manages AECL's sites and as such, implements management arrangements for AECL's radioactive wastes which are varied given the legacy nature of AECL's sites and operations. Other radioactive waste owners in Canada have proposed and made decisions for the life-cycle management of their waste that are based on their particular circumstances. This landscape is explored from the perspective of AECL as a radioactive waste owner, with examples of decisions taken in Canada with a view to putting into context differences in decision-making.