

Ohio 45061 or by calling the FCAB Office at (513) 648-6478.

Issued at Washington, DC on December 29, 1998.

Rachel M. Samuel,

Deputy Advisory Committee Management Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Office of Fossil Energy

[FE Docket No. 98-98-NG]

Boston Gas Company; Order Granting Long-Term Authorization To Import Natural Gas From Canada

AGENCY: Office of Fossil Energy, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of order.

SUMMARY: The Office of Fossil Energy (FE) of the Department of Energy (DOE) gives notice that it issued DOE/FE Order No. 1445 (Order 1445) on December 17, 1998, granting Boston Gas Company (Boston Gas) authorization to import at Bailyville, Maine, up to 43,200 Mcf per day of natural gas from Canada for a period of eight years commencing November 1, 1999, through March 31, 2007. This gas will originate from natural gas fields off the east coast of Canada near Sable Island. The proposed Maritimes and Northeast Pipeline is the transportation facility that will deliver the gas from Nova Scotia to the United States pipeline grid in Massachusetts.

Boston Gas, a Massachusetts local distribution company, intends to use the imported gas, to be purchased from Imperial Oil Resources Limited (Imperial), as part of its supply portfolio. The import will replace western Canada gas supplies acquired from Imperial pursuant to DOE/FE Opinion and Order No. 552 (Order 552), issued November 27, 1991 (1 FE ¶ 70,503). Boston Gas requests Order 552 be terminated November 1, 1999, to coincide with the effective date of Order 1445.

Order 1445 may be found on the FE web site at <http://www.fe.doe.gov>, or on our electronic bulletin board at (202) 586-7853. It is also available for inspection and copying in the Office of Natural Gas & Petroleum Import and Export Activities Docket Room, 3E-033, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585-0334, (202) 586-9478. The Docket Room is open between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Issued in Washington, DC, December 22, 1998.

John W. Glynn,

Manager, Natural Gas Regulation, Office of Natural Gas & Petroleum, Import and Export Activities, Office of Fossil Energy.

[FR Doc. 99-91 Filed 1-4-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Notice of Availability; Viability Assessment of a Repository at Yucca Mountain

AGENCY: Department of Energy (DOE).

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) announces the availability of a DOE report to Congress entitled *Viability Assessment of a Repository at Yucca Mountain*. The Viability Assessment is essentially a technical status report of the ongoing DOE scientific investigations concerning the potential for locating a geologic repository for spent nuclear fuel and high-level waste at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. It brings together data drawn from 15 years of scientific investigation and design work at Yucca Mountain and identifies what the DOE has learned about the site and what it believes are the critical areas for additional investigation. Submission of this report to the President and the Congress was directed in the Fiscal Year 1997 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act.

ADDRESSES: Any written requests for information or copies of the *Viability Assessment of a Repository at Yucca Mountain* should be directed to:

Allen Benson,
Director, Institutional Affairs,
Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Office, M/S 523,

U.S. Department of Energy, 1261 Town Center Drive,
Las Vegas, NV 89134.

The *Viability Assessment of a Repository at Yucca Mountain* is available in both printed and CD ROM formats. Persons wishing to request copies or receive information by telephone should call 1-800-225-6972. Electronic requests for copies may be made on the Internet at: <http://www.ymp.gov/learn/order.htm>. Electronic copies of the Viability Assessment or DOE supporting documents are available for viewing and downloading on the Internet at <http://www.ymp.gov/va.htm>. Information to assist in locating non-DOE reference documents may also be obtained at that address. The *Viability Assessment of a*

Repository at Yucca Mountain may also be obtained at DOE Reading Rooms located at:

U.S. Department of Energy, 1141 S. Highway 160 No. 3, Pahrump, NV 89048, 702-727-0896

U.S. Department of Energy, 100 North E Avenue & State Route 374, Beatty, NV 89003, 702-553-2130

U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Ave, SW, Room 1E-190, Washington, DC 20585 (Document viewing only, for copies call 1-800-225-6972.)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information on the *Viability Assessment of a Repository at Yucca Mountain* please contact: Allen Benson, Director of Institutional Affairs, Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Office, at the above address, by telephone at 1-800-225-6972, or by e-mail through our Website at <http://www.ymp.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Viability Assessment summarizes a large technical body of work from field investigations, laboratory tests, models, analyses, and engineering that is described in cited references. The Viability Assessment identifies the uncertainties relevant to the technical defensibility of the DOE analyses and designs, the approach to managing these uncertainties, the status of work toward the site recommendation and license application, plans for the remaining work, and the estimated costs of completing a license application and constructing and operating a repository.

The Viability Assessment is not intended to be a decision document, but rather, was developed as a program management tool and milestone. The Viability Assessment in no way constrains further DOE investigations. If new or different issues are identified in response to the Viability Assessment that are important to the evaluation of the suitability of the site, DOE will undertake any necessary investigation into those issues.

The Viability Assessment

In the Fiscal Year 1997 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act Congress required the DOE to produce a Viability Assessment of the work being done to characterize the site at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, approximately 100 miles from Las Vegas, Nevada. Congress stipulated that the Viability Assessment include:

- “(1) the preliminary design concept for the critical elements for the repository and waste package;
- (2) a total system performance assessment, based upon the design concept and the

scientific data and analysis available by September 30, 1998, describing the probable behavior of the repository in the Yucca Mountain geological setting relative to the overall system performance standards;

(3) a plan and cost estimate for the remaining work required to complete a license application; and

(4) an estimate of the costs to construct and operate the repository in accordance with the design concept." (Public Law 104-206-September 30, 1996)

The Viability Assessment is presented in five volumes. Volume 1 provides an introduction to the assessment and a description of site characteristics. This includes the purpose and scope of the assessment; a description of the radioactive waste forms destined for geologic disposal; discussion of the technical challenges posed by permanent geologic disposal; a historical perspective of the disposal program; and, a description of the site at Yucca Mountain, Nevada.

Volume 2 presents a preliminary design concept for the repository and waste package. The discussion and descriptions include: design process and design bases; the preliminary design concept for repository surface and subsurface facilities, and the waste package with associated engineered barriers; concepts for construction, operation, monitoring, and closure of a repository; design flexibility considerations; and, major design alternatives.

Volume 3 is a total system performance assessment of a repository at Yucca Mountain. The analyses and discussion include: a definition of total system performance assessment; the objectives, approach, methodology and base case results of the performance assessment; description of the development of the components of the technical model used; and, sensitivity analyses of the components of the performance assessment.

Volume 4 is the license application plan and cost for licensing a repository at Yucca Mountain. This includes: a rationale for the technical work needed to complete the license application; a description of technical work plans for further site investigations, design and performance assessment analyses; and, a discussion of statutory, regulatory and support activities needed to complete a license application process. In addition, the costs and schedule to complete the work are described.

Volume 5 is a description of the costs to construct and operate a repository at Yucca Mountain. This volume includes discussion and tables on: cost elements; project phases; major assumptions; and an integrated cost summary.

An Overview will accompany the Viability Assessment. The Overview is intended to summarize the over 1,400 pages of material contained in the Viability Assessment in a less technical format.

All five volumes contain citations to references used to prepare the document. These references, or supporting documents, may be found through the following Internet address <<http://www.ym.gov/va.htm>.

Documents which are DOE products are available electronically on the Internet home page. Other reference documents are listed with information intended to assist researchers in finding the documents through a public library.

Based on the results of the Viability Assessment, the Department believes that scientific and technical work at Yucca Mountain should proceed. The Viability Assessment is not a decision on Yucca Mountain. It will, however, provide a road map for future work necessary to support a decision in 2001 on whether to recommend the site to the President for development as a repository.

Issued in Washington, D.C. December 21, 1998.

Lake H. Barrett,

Acting Director, Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management.

[FR Doc. 99-88 Filed 1-4-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Energy Conservation Program for Consumer Products; Representative Average Unit Costs of Energy

AGENCY: Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In this notice, the Department of Energy (DOE or Department) is forecasting the representative average unit costs of five residential energy sources for the year 1999. The five sources are electricity, natural gas, No. 2 heating oil, propane, and kerosene. The representative unit costs of these energy sources are used in the Energy Conservation Program for Consumer Products established by Part B of Title III of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, 42 U.S.C. 6291-6309 (EPCA).

EFFECTIVE DATE: The representative average unit costs of energy contained in this notice will become effective

February 4, 1999 and will remain in effect until further notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Dr. Barry P. Berlin, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Forrestal Building, Mail Station EE-43, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585-0121, (202) 586-9127

Eugene Margolis, Esq., U.S. Department of Energy, Office of General Counsel, Forrestal Building, Mail Station GC-72, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585-0103, (202) 586-9507

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 323 of the EPCA (Act) ¹ requires that DOE prescribe test procedures for the determination of the estimated annual operating costs or other measures of energy consumption for certain consumer products specified in the Act. These test procedures are found in 10 CFR Part 430, Subpart B.

Section 323(b) of the Act requires that the estimated annual operating costs of a covered product be computed from measurements of energy use in a representative average-use cycle and from representative average unit costs of energy needed to operate such product during such cycle. The section further requires DOE to provide information regarding the representative average unit costs of energy for use wherever such costs are needed to perform calculations in accordance with the test procedures. Most notably, these costs are used under the Federal Trade Commission's appliance labeling program, established by section 324 of the Act, and in connection with advertisements of appliance energy use and energy costs, which are covered by section 323(c) of the Act.

The Department last published representative average unit costs of residential energy for use in the Energy Conservation Program for Consumer Products Other Than Automobiles on December 8, 1997 (62 FR 64574). Effective February 4, 1999, the cost figures published on December 8, 1997, will be superseded by the cost figures set forth in this notice.

The Department's Energy Information Administration (EIA) has developed the 1999 representative average unit after-tax costs of electricity, natural gas, No. 2 heating oil, propane and kerosene prices found in this notice. The cost projections for heating oil, electricity, and natural gas are found in the fourth quarter, 1998, EIA *Short-Term Energy*

¹ References to the "Act" refer to the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, as amended, 42 U.S.C. §§ 6291-6309.