

Yucca Mountain may be too small when it finally opens

So? What's new ... this has been known for years hence the reprocessing alternatives.

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A long-delayed nuclear waste dump in Nevada that has cost \$9 billion so far is years away from opening, the project's director told frustrated lawmakers Wednesday, and will be at capacity from radioactive waste now accumulating.

The Energy Department also plans to determine the need for a second site for an underground dump, said Paul Golan, acting director of the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management.

Department officials had most recently set 2012 as the projected opening for the first nuclear waste dump, at Yucca Mountain, 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas, but have backed off that goal. Golan would only say Wednesday, "We should be able to open it next decade."

The original target was 1998. **(No, the original target was 1985 according the 1982 Waste Act.)**

"It's obvious the 2012 date is now out the window," said Rep. David Hobson, R-Ohio, chairman of the House Appropriations' energy subcommittee.

Some 55,000 tons of waste are collecting at commercial reactor sites in 39 states. Yucca Mountain is supposed to hold 77,000 tons of radioactive waste.

"Frankly I don't want to build eight Yucca Mountains," said Hobson, who has pressed the department to establish interim, above-ground storage sites for nuclear waste.