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Audio Script for Information Center Transportation Display

Can waste be transported safely to Yucca Mountain? Both the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission have found that spent nuclear fuel can be shipped safely and securely. In fact, over the last 30 years there have been more than 2,700 shipments of spent nuclear fuel traveling more than 1.7 million miles, and there has never been a release of radioactive material harmful to the public or the environment – not one.

Spent nuclear fuel is a solid material - it cannot leak, burn, or explode. The shipping containers, called casks, are the most robust in the transportation industry and must be certified by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. They are designed to protect public health and safety under normal and severe accident conditions. Typically, every ton of shipped spent fuel is contained within approximately 4 tons of protective shielding and structural materials.

How many shipments would be made to Yucca Mountain? DOE would use mainly trains and some legal-weight trucks to move spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste to Yucca Mountain. Once the repository opens, DOE estimates an average of 130 rail shipments and 45 truck shipments per year for 24 years.