



Citizens Advisory Board
Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory

OPENING THE INEEL TECHNICAL LIBRARY TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

INTRODUCTION

The Citizens Advisory Board to the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory discussed the current restrictions on public access to the INEEL Technical Library during its July 15-16, 1997, and September 16-17, 1997 meetings. The INEEL Technical Library serves as an excellent resource to the employees of DOE and its contractors. In the past, the library also served to broaden the base of information available to the general public on issues of nuclear energy, nuclear waste, environmental management, and other areas of scientific interest. As such, it helped educate the citizens of southeastern Idaho on issues related to the INEEL and served as a general resource to visiting researchers, students, families of employees, retirees, and other members of the general public.

RECOMMENDATION

The Citizens Advisory Board recommends that the Department of Energy Idaho Operations Office facilitate the re-opening of the INEEL Technical Library to all members of the public and requests that a careful analysis of the true costs involved in library operations be conducted. For example, in light of the relaxing of security restrictions across the DOE complex, the Board suggests that library security need only be sufficient to ensure that materials do not leave the library without authorization. In addition, a coin-operated public copy machine could be utilized to provide some revenue. If lack of funding is the main barrier to re-opening the library, the Board requests a response providing a detailed accounting of the costs involved and the basis for determining the level of resources needed. Currently the INEEL Technical Library is the only library in the DOE complex not open to the public, and DOE should explain the rationale for this.