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Energy Secretary Bill Richardson To Participate In Y2K Utilities Drill

9/9/99 Provides Dress Rehearsal For End of Year Computer Rollover

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Bonneville Power Administration
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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With the Year 2000 (Y2K) only about 100 days away, U.S. Energy Secretary Bill Richardson will participate in a drill at the Department of Energy's Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) in Vancouver, Washington, to test the nation's electric utility industry's readiness.

"This industry-wide drill is yet another way to test whether local utility companies will have power after the clock strikes midnight at the end of the year," Secretary Richardson said. "The nation's 3,200 electric utility companies and cooperatives need to do everything they can to test their preparedness and ensure consumers a smooth transition into the Year 2000."

The BPA drill is part of a nationwide Y2K preparedness test. On September 8, electric utility power plants across the country will prepare for and closely monitor the date rollover at midnight. 9/9/99 is a key date for Y2K testing because computer users have used nines to mean end of input, which could shut down computers programs on this date. The drill is intended to simulate as realistically as possible the exercise of operation, communications, administrative and contingency plans for the Y2K transition.

BPA owns and operates one of the nation's biggest high-voltage transmission grids. About 15,000 circuit miles of transmission line network across 300,000 square miles in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and sections of Wyoming, Nevada, Utah and California.

Immediately following the test at BPA, Secretary Richardson will receive reports on the utility tests held in other areas of the country.

WHO: Bill Richardson, U.S. Secretary of Energy

WHAT: Participate in BPA Y2K Drill and Brief Media On Results of Nationwide Y2K Utility Test

WHEN: 11:45 p.m./PST, Wednesday, September 8, 1999
(Camera crews should make arrangements to arrive earlier.)

WHERE: Bonneville Power Administration Ross Complex, 5411 NE Highway 99, Vancouver, WA

WHY: To Test Readiness of Electric Utilities' Power Delivery Systems During a Y2K Rollover Exercise

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