For further information about the plans for the decommissioning, timeline or general inquiries please refer to the following website:

uab.ca/slowpoke

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA SLOWPOKE NUCLEAR REACTOR IS TO BE REMOVED FROM SERVICE AND ITS DISMANTLED COMPONENTS MOVED AWAY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA IN A PROCESS REFERRED TO AS DECOMMISSIONING. THE INITIAL SITE WORK FOR THE DECOMMISSIONING WILL COMMENCE IN THE SPRING OF 2017.

In 1977 the University of Alberta opened the doors on its newly commissioned SLOWPOKE (Safe LOW Po wer Kritical Experiment) Nuclear Reactor Facility—the fourth SLOWPOKE II research reactor installed on a Canadian university campus at the time—located on the North campus. The reactor was designed, built and installed by Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) and was commissioned on April 22, 1977.

Since that time the reactor has been used as a source of neutrons for radionuclide production and elemental analysis via neutron activation analysis (NAA), in support of research and teaching at the University and as a service to industry and government. SLOWPOKE is licensed to operate at 20 kW, and generates less heat than that produced by the furnace of a small Alberta house. Much of the work done with the reactor is performed at one-tenth full power, or 2 kW, less than that needed to simultaneously operate an electric kettle and toaster.

The University of Alberta is working with and through the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) on a series of steps that will ensure that all aspects related to the decommissioning of the SLOWPOKE and removal of equipment are carried out in accordance with all regulations and safe work practices.

One of the steps of the decommissioning process involves community consultation which will include opportunities such as a public information meeting, access to information about the decommissioning process, schedule and contact person details for all inquiries.

Final approval to decommission the SLOWPOKE is granted by CNSC who is responsible for issuing the required license after all due diligence has been completed.

The University of Alberta will follow all requirements and regulations required to decommission the SLOWPOKE facility as set out by the CNSC. The University anticipates that the physical activities related to the decommissioning of the SLOWPOKE will be completed by late fall 2017/ early spring 2018.