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**EPA Recertifies WIPP's Continued Compliance
with Radioactive Waste Disposal Standards**

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced today the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) has been recertified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and remains in full compliance with applicable EPA regulations for transuranic radioactive waste disposal.

“This decision reconfirms WIPP’s long-term ability to safely isolate transuranic waste from the environment,” said Todd Shrader, DOE Carlsbad Field Office Manager. “I want to thank everyone who worked on the EPA Compliance Recertification Application. The recertification is highly important to the continued operation of WIPP and represents a lot of work by our federal and contractor staff and the EPA.”

EPA’s recertification decision is based on a thorough review of information submitted by DOE, independent technical analyses, and public comments. The recertification process, which began in March 2014, was not related to recovery efforts from the recent events at WIPP, but rather a process to verify that changes at the site in the preceding five-year period comply with EPA disposal standards for radioactive waste.

DOE is required by law to submit documentation of continued compliance at five-year intervals until the facility is decommissioned. EPA first certified WIPP as compliant in 1998. The initial Compliance Certification Application demonstrated how the geological, hydrological, physical, chemical and environmental characteristics of the site, along with engineered features of the facility, would safely contain radioactive waste for a 10,000-year regulatory time period.

A copy of EPA’s WIPP recertification package is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/radiation/certification-and-recertification-wipp>

WIPP is a DOE facility designed to safely isolate defense-related transuranic waste from people and the environment. Waste temporarily stored at sites around the country is shipped to WIPP and permanently disposed in rooms mined out of an ancient salt formation 2,150 feet below the surface. WIPP, which began waste disposal operations in 1999, is located 26 miles outside of Carlsbad, N.M. WIPP has safely transported more than 11,000 shipments over more than 14 million loaded miles.