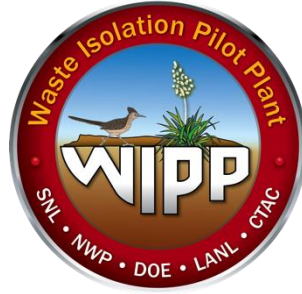


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**WIPP UPDATE: September 15, 2017**

**DOE Extends Contract for Operating WIPP**

Carlsbad, New Mexico – The Department of Energy issued a modification to the contract with Nuclear Waste Partnership (NWP) for the management and operations of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in Carlsbad, NM. The contract modification will enhance the focus on safety, provide cost incentives that will increase the value to the taxpayers, and reward the workforce for safe and efficient operations. The contract modification will also provide greater support for the community of Carlsbad. The Department has extended NWP’s period of performance to September 30, 2020, which exercises a newly-negotiated option to extend three of the available five years remaining on the contract.

“This negotiated option will give Nuclear Waste Partnership the necessary time to continue the progress they have achieved through the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant recovery and resumption of shipments,” said DOE Carlsbad Field Office Manager Todd Shrader. “The enhancements to the contract are expected to ensure WIPP is operated safely and efficiently in both waste emplacement and mining operations.”

Key contract modifications include the following enhancements:

- Incorporate a cost incentive into the contract that would share savings between NWP and its workforce, provided work is performed safely
- Through annual fee awards, increase incentives for improvements to safety-related activities
- Revise key personnel provisions of contract to establish a Chief Mining Officer to focus on the safety of the mine
- Commitment from NWP to increase investments in the local community
- Provide valuable services to the local community at no cost to DOE or the community

The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) is the nation's only facility for deep geological disposal of transuranic radioactive waste (TRU) as by-products of nuclear weapons production and disassembly. It has been developed by the U.S. Department of Energy in southeastern New Mexico, about 26 miles east of Carlsbad.