

# TRU TeamWorks

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## Feedback

Contact us with [feedback](#) or submit your e-mail address for updates.

## By the Numbers

### Shipments

Scheduled to arrive  
01/30/05 - 02/05/05:

Hanford - 3  
INEEL - 2  
LLNL - 3  
RFETS - 16

(subject to change)

3,290 total shipments  
received as of 01/26/05

### Disposal

Waste disposed as of  
01/26/05:

4,242 standard waste  
boxes  
1,285 ten-drum  
overpacks  
59,206 waste drums  
26,191 cubic meters



### The Big Story:

## A fond farewell

WTS General Manager Steve Warren looks back on two years at WIPP ...



### Operations:

## CCP teams make pit stop at INEEL

Waste retrieval moves from asphalt to dirt ...



### Operations:

## A new coat of paint works wonders

TRUPACT-IIs get new coating ...



### Working Smart:

## Just a click away

Accessing DOE photos has never been easier ...



### Safety & Security:

## To be or not to be ... recordable

Test your knowledge on these recordable injury scenarios ...



### Our Team:

## Team news

Keep up with WIPP team happenings ...





WTS General Manager Steve Warren



## WTS receives contract extension to manage WIPP

On January 18, DOE announced that WTS received a five-year contract extension to manage and operate WIPP.

The extension was granted when the DOE exercised a five-year option - part of a contract WTS competitively bid and was awarded in 2000.

In the next five years, WTS will manage operations worth approximately \$704 million. The contract includes performance goals that call for WTS to dispose 20,000 additional cubic meters of waste, finish the cleanup of some sites 5 to 10 years early, and clean up 70 percent of all legacy TRU waste by the end of 2010, compared with 53 percent targeted during prior planning.

Details of the contract extension will be communicated to WTS/WRES employees in all-employee meetings Monday, January 31.

## Warren looks back on WIPP experience

**O**utgoing WTS General Manager Steve Warren reports to WIPP on January 31 for his final day at the project. As he heads to a new assignment with Washington Group International in South Carolina, he reflects on his experience at WIPP.

### In your opinion, what were the project's top accomplishments during your tenure?

The acceleration of the Central Characterization Project - especially at SRS, the cleanup of legacy TRU waste at five small-quantity sites; the safety record in 2004 - which was the best ever; and finally, the completion and transport of the Characterization and Repackaging Mobile Unit to SRS.

I am also very pleased about the successful negotiation of the contract option. WTS is now poised to take the project into the next five years, during which I expect much of our hard work to pay off in real program accomplishments.

### What will you miss the most about WIPP?

The high energy level and the people. The energy level was higher here than anywhere else I've ever worked, and that kept *my* energy level up. I will also miss the city of Carlsbad and the great weather that allowed me to play golf in January.

My time at WIPP has been very educational and I leave the project a better manager, thanks to my experiences and the people with whom I worked. One person who taught me a great deal was Bill Keeley. I have never met a better communicator. His skills are crucial to this company and Washington Group needs more people like him. Terry Frye shared with me the complexities of the human resources side of business. David Reber and Yolanda Navarrete are two of the best people I have ever had the pleasure of working with. They brought humor into my day and kept me in line.

Thanks to Ron Head and Norm Whitlock, I now have a strong appreciation for the importance of the internal audit process. Surviving two years of Darold Haug has made me a stronger person, as anyone can imagine. Finally, Patty Williams taught me patience. I managed to listen to her entire voice mail message once, and it took all I had to make it through to the beep.

### Any regrets?

I regret that I will not be here to share in some of the accomplishments I expect the WIPP team to achieve in the next five years: receipt of the first RH waste, the successful completion of large container NDA/NDE, the first shipment of waste in a TRUPACT-III and witnessing the cleanup of a major generator site like Rocky Flats.

I have seen all of our hard work to make those goals a reality. And though these programs are not quite to the finish line, with more hard work, I am confident that the WIPP team will achieve every one of them.

### Final thoughts?

I want every WTS employee to understand that while WIPP is an incredible project, they are part of an incredible corporation in Washington Group. If they wish to expand their experiences, they should consider moving their careers into a different direction within the corporation. Washington Group has offices and projects across the globe and many opportunities for movement within the company exist. I invite anyone who wishes to expand their horizons beyond WIPP to contact me personally or to get in touch with Human Resources for more information.

Finally, I want to wish all WIPP employees my very best. Each person contributes dramatically to the success of the project. I know that you have lots of hard work ahead of you and I hope that as you move forward into the next five years you'll keep my number one priority ahead of you: safety and quality before schedules and costs.

Good luck to all!

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## Cooperation - A breath of fresh air

It's a down weekend - no ongoing production on the 850 Level of WIPP's neighbor mine, Mosaic Potash. Suddenly, belt personnel encounter smoke and flames in an underground shop. Wonder why you didn't see a news story? It was a staged exercise to test the response skills of Mosaic and WIPP mine rescue teams.

### Exercise

The request for WIPP team response came in around 8:00 a.m. on January 14. The scenario: two maintenance personnel were unaccounted for, while a combustible fire burned in Mosaic's Work Area No.7.

With gear at the ready, WIPP mine rescue teams reported to Mosaic's No.5 shaft. Members were assigned to mixed teams, combining WIPP rescuers with Mosaic team members, familiar with that mine's layout, qualified equipment operators and hazards.

The first team established a fresh air base and advanced barefaced (no breathing apparatus) toward the work area. Detecting smoke, team members donned their self-contained breathing apparatuses. They attempted to put out the fire, but couldn't, and soon discovered the first of two missing miners. The victim, who had sustained first and second degree burns, was rendered aid and quickly transported out of the mine.

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## Pit 4 cleanup underway at INEEL

**I**n 1970, changes in nuclear waste disposal regulations required that TRU wastes be retrievably-stored. While many generator sites continued to bury waste containers in shallow berms or trenches, most post-'70s TRU waste was stored aboveground, often in RCRA-approved buildings or other structures. Documented, packaged and stacked in tidy rows, such wastes were steps ahead in preparation for WIPP characterization and final disposal processes. But, there's more to national cleanup than retrieving containers on asphalt pads.

Pit 4 at INEEL is one example. Last October, two Central Characterization Project (CCP) units deployed to INEEL to work alongside Bechtel B&W Idaho (BBWI) in cleaning up a small section of Pit 4, a pre-1970s subsurface disposal area. BBWI would exhume shallow-buried TRU wastes, while CCP would train and supervise BBWI personnel performing VE, solids sampling and packaging.

Now underway, Bob Billett, CCP project manager at INEEL, says the project is slow-going, but methodic and thorough. Inside HEPA-filtered tents, BBWI excavator operators, assisted by closed-circuit TV cameras, unearth layers of topsoil to uncover wastes left undisturbed for decades. Waste materials are placed in lined trays and moved to a drum package station for sampling and repackaging, as needed. Billett says that wastes from designated areas will be sampled prior to packaging to minimize core sampling later.

"The retrieval process started up with cap (topsoil) removal and pulling up waste last Saturday," said Billett. "We are steadily increasing safe and compliant production. BBWI plans to dig up roughly a half-acre of waste, a quarter-acre at a time," he adds. "Retrieval operators are doing a great job and the rest of the characterization people are working toward start-up."

**R**ocky Flats began sending defense TRU wastes to INEEL in 1952. From 1963 to 1967 more than 45,000 m<sup>3</sup> was buried on Pit 4's 97 acres. The initial half-acre plot is located near the center of Pit 4 and was selected for its high concentrations of TRU waste. The \$208.5M, three-year cleanup effort is a Superfund action to reduce risk to Idaho's Snake River Plain aquifer.

Stay tuned for progress reports as waste characterization systems begin operations and shipments arrive in the coming months.



Overburden removal in INEEL's Pit 4.

*(photo from [www.cleanup.ineel.gov](http://www.cleanup.ineel.gov))*

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A second team was dispatched underground and found the other miner unconscious, but without visible injury. He was given oxygen and also transported out. As teams awaited further direction from the command center, the allotted time ran out and the exercise was terminated.

As part of a Memorandum of Agreement between DOE and local potash mines, joint exercises are conducted to hone command center and rescue team capabilities in preparation for real underground emergencies.

These dedicated teams provide an invaluable service to southeast New Mexico, where WIPP and the potash industry are two of the area's largest employers.



Underground at Mosaic: (from left to right) WIPP mine rescue team members David Ripley, Curtis Sanders III, Mike Proctor, Greg Sensibaugh and Mosaic mine rescue team members Kevin Cummins and Joe Parker.

## Just like new

**E**quipment in general, regardless of its use, is subject to normal wear and tear. WIPP's TRUPACT-II is no exception. The rugged shipping containers traverse our nation's highways daily, safely delivering TRU waste to WIPP. And at just under \$500,000 each, the fleet of 84 is expected to last the project's lifetime.

To reduce normal road wear, plans are in the works to give the TRUPACT-IIs a protective coat. When they were manufactured, no protective coating was applied to their stainless steel exteriors. Exposure to road salt and other shipping hazards has caused the packages to show some wear.

WTS packaging engineer Todd Sellmer, tasked with finding a solution, researched the subject and determined that a coat of polyurethane high gloss grey protective coating would extend TRUPACT longevity.

Sellmer says the surface of each package must first receive an abrasive blast-cleaning and an epoxy primer before applying the final coat. The process is expected to take around seven work days and consume three gallons of paint per TRUPACT.

**T**o ensure the paint's quality and meet specifications for coating thickness, the paint supplier was required to meet strict criteria. And painters must first complete and pass specialized training for applying the coats.

"This type of paint coating is extremely strong and resistant to many of the elements that may cause the exterior of the package to degrade," said Sellmer. Asked if the specialized paint would affect the TRUPACT's design, Sellmer added, "the coatings are applied under very controlled conditions, other than adding a little weight - approximately 50 lbs. per package - there are no design issues associated with the paint."

The TRUPACT-II was certified by the NRC in 1989 following rigorous tests that included a 30-foot drop onto a concrete slab and a 30-minute burn in jet fuel at 1450°F.

Washington Engineered Products Division has been awarded the contract to paint the TRUPACT-IIs. The company currently performs annual maintenance on the shipping containers. The first package is expected to be painted this quarter.



TRUPACT-II shipping containers will soon receive new coats of paint.

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## TRU waste complex representatives meet in Carlsbad

Expediting national TRU waste cleanup at DOE generator sites and increasing waste shipments to WIPP will be the subject of next week's DOE National TRU Waste Summit and Corporate Board Meeting to be held January 31 through February 2 at Carlsbad's Pecos River Village.

More than 80 high-level DOE and contractor representatives from TRU waste sites will participate in the meetings. In addition to the discussions, a number of participants will tour the WIPP's surface and underground facilities.

## DOE's corner of the visual world

**D**on't blink or you might miss something! Messages in today's world rely less on the written word than they used to and more on the power of images. But good communication is less about having a picture on a page and more about having the right picture on a page. To keep up with the demands of our visual world, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) created the DOE Digital Photo Archive.

The archive is a centralized online source of pictures of DOE programs and projects. Rather than traveling to or contacting individual DOE sites across the country for photographs, you can search the collection for quality images that meet your needs. And unlike other online sources of stock photographs, these are provided to the public free of charge.

The Office of Administration's Energy Technology Visual Collection dates back to 1977. In 1999, the process of digitizing the photos began and they were combined with digitized photos from the Office of Environmental Management.

"This was the first time that the entire collection of images was digitized and made available online," says the archive's program manager, Helen Criaes, of Millennium Tek Inc. "We welcome contributions from all DOE laboratories and field sites, so that we can highlight the Department's programs and achievements."



**W**hen the archive first became available online in January 2001, it contained more than 8,500 images. Today, that number has expanded to more than 12,000. The archive is used by DOE personnel, the public, researchers, publishers, the media and scientists in the United States and internationally. Visitors to the Web site are able to browse and search the images and may also establish a user account, which would allow the creation of individual portfolios of select photos. The number of registered users has increased from 289 to more than 670. And although images on the site are viewed in low resolution, high-resolution images are available upon request.

So if you're working on a project and need an image related to WIPP or any DOE project, visit the archive at [www.doedigitalarchive.doe.gov](http://www.doedigitalarchive.doe.gov) or click on Press Room from the DOE home page. Oh, and it's okay to blink. You won't miss a thing, because DOE's Digital Photo Archive has got you covered.

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**Safety Reminder:**

The speed limit in the parking lots at WIPP and the Skeen-Whitlock Building is 10 miles per hour.



## Coloring inside the lines

Above: **Jerome Hernandez** (left) and **Luke Meadors** (right) were hard at work on January 26, repainting the striping in front of the warehouse.

Below: A close-up of **Luke** at work.



## The geography of recordable injuries

**L**ocation, location, location. That's the mantra of the real estate world, but it also raises an interesting question for safety professionals. Specifically, to what degree does location affect whether or not an incident is a recordable injury?

"The Occupational Safety and Health Administration sets forth the guidelines for what is a recordable injury," says Tom Ferguson, WTS Industrial Safety and Hygiene manager. "There are several factors to consider, including the type of treatment required, where the incident occurred and other circumstances."

Some scenarios are described below. Can you correctly identify which ones would be recordable?

A WIPP employee accidentally hits another vehicle with his car in the parking lot when arriving for work. He cuts his forehead, requiring stitches.

*Not recordable. Injuries are recordable only if they are work-related. Although OSHA defines work-related as being assumed if it happens on company property, a few exceptions are listed in the standard. Traffic accidents while commuting to and from work, even if they occur on company property, are among those exceptions.*

Scenario 1a: A WIPP employee accidentally hits a coworker's car with his hand while walking through the parking lot on his way to work, requiring stitches.

*Recordable. This was not a traffic accident, but did involve the employee arriving for work and did occur on company property. Therefore, OSHA says it's deemed work-related and stitches are one criterion for a work-related injury becoming recordable.*

Scenario 2: WIPP employee is involved in an accident on US Highway 62/180 on the way to work at the site. The employee requires only a band aid, but the doctor prescribes a prescription medication for muscle soreness.

*Not recordable. A work-related injury is automatically recordable when prescription medication is required. However, in this scenario, the employee was not yet on the property and the traffic accident exception would have applied even if he had been in the parking lot.*

Scenario 3: A WIPP employee leaves the site for a meeting at the Skeen-Whitlock Building. She stops at a convenience store for a soft drink and slips on ice in the parking lot, breaking her arm.

*Not recordable. OSHA says in 29 CFR 1904.5(b)(6)(ii) "Injuries or illnesses are not considered work-related if they occur while the employee is on a personal detour from a reasonably direct route of travel (e.g. has taken a side trip for personal reasons)."*

Scenario 3a: That same employee is involved in a traffic accident between the convenience store and the Skeen-Whitlock Building, and faints from the excitement.

*Recordable. She had returned to her duties upon leaving the convenience store and was in performance of her work. OSHA defines the "work environment" to include the car that she was using to travel from one work location to another. Notice, this does not fall into the traffic accident exemption because she was not commuting to or from work. Also, loss of consciousness, for whatever reason, is recordable when work-relatedness can be shown.*

In the event of an incident, WIPP's safety professionals decide if an injury is recordable based on the OSHA guidelines. If you have any questions, contact Curtis Wynne at Ext. 8745.

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## Feed me, Sanford

Remember the 1986 movie "*Little Shop of Horrors*" about a plant that grew so large, its caretaker began feeding it people? If site personnel come up missing, we'll know to check first at **Sanford Watson's** cube where his creeping charlie plant is thriving on . . . something.

## Safety calendar available on CD

The 2005 safety calendar is available on compact disk by contacting Melody Smith at Ext. 8718, Mak Walker at Ext. 7265 or Mike Antiporda at Ext. 7215.

Employees may also access the calendar on the Industrial Safety intranet page.



## Birthdays

**Beverly Crawford (LANL/CB)** - January 27  
**Gail Ellet (L&M)** - January 27  
**Linda Pastorello (WRES)** - January 27  
**Ron Richardson (WRES)** - January 27  
**Rick Salness (WRES)** - January 27  
**Ross Kirkes (SNL-CPG)** - January 28  
**Jerry Osborne (WTS)** - January 28  
**David Ramirez (L&M)** - January 31  
**Jeff Winkel (WTS)** - February 2  
**Joe Willis (WTS)** - February 3  
**Deanne Rodriguez (WTS)** - February 4  
**Bob Nieman (WTS)** - February 7  
**Steve Sauer (NCI)** - February 7  
**Ashok Kadakia (WTS)** - February 8  
**Gayla White (L&M)** - February 8



## Leaving

**Mike Caviness**, WTS Packaging Engineering, will be leaving WIPP effective January 27.



## In Memoriam

**George Perkins**, a retired SNL scientist who worked extensively on the preparation of data for WIPP's original Compliance Certification Application, died on Tuesday, January 18, after a long and courageous battle with cancer.

Perkins was one of two team leaders for Sandia's WIPP chemistry program during the preparation of the CCA. He later served the project as team lead for establishing Sandia's first chemistry lab at WIPP.



## Hillcrest elementary school seeks science volunteers

Hillcrest elementary school is holding its annual science fair and competition on Friday, Feb. 18th. The school is searching for three volunteers to judge the projects created by the students.

Judges should have a background in science and a willingness to encourage the next generation of scientists and inventors.

The judging will take approximately two hours and will involve examining project boards and presentations based on proper scientific method, neatness and accuracy. Judges may also interview students about their projects. Winners in 4th and 5th grades will receive ribbons.

Scientists from all WIPP project participant organizations are invited to volunteer. The first three responders will be selected.

Please contact Kim Greer at Ext. 7293 to volunteer, or for more information.

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