

TRU TeamWorks

March 10, 2005

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Feedback

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

By the Numbers

Shipments

Scheduled to arrive
03/13/05 - 03/19/05:

Hanford - 2
INL - 6
RFETS - 17
SRS - 4

(subject to change)

total shipments
received as of 03/09/05:
3,415

Disposal

Waste disposed as of
03/09/05:

4,337 standard waste
boxes
1,356 ten-drum
overpacks
60,833 waste drums
27,031 cubic meters



The Big Story:

TRANSCOM comes to WIPP
TRANSCOM will soon be close-up and
personnel ...



Operations:

First on, last out
A "TRU-ly" unique waste story ...



Operations:

Lab down under
Unused areas in WIPP mine will soon be
put to good use ...



Working Smart:

Submissions wanted
Join the search for an official WIPP logo
and motto ...



Safety & Security:

Safe solution
Satellite phones solve safety concern ...



Our Team:

Team news
WIPP team news and information ...



TRU TeamWorks is a biweekly e-newsletter for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant team



Your P2
Coordinator asks,
"Did you know
that ..."

One recycled
aluminum can saves
enough energy to
power a television for
3 hours.

Recycling one glass
bottle saves enough
energy to light a 100-
watt light bulb for 4
hours.

Recycling a one-gallon
plastic milk jug will
save enough energy to
keep a 100-watt bulb
burning for 11 hours.

Recycling one pound
of steel conserves
enough energy to light
a 60-watt bulb for 26
hours.

Recycling a one-foot-
high stack of
newspapers saves
enough electricity to
heat a home for 17
hours.

Source: Waste Management
(excerpted from: MSNBC.com,
3/1/05
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/5279230/page/2/>)

– Submitted by
Celeste M. Marsh, WRES
Pollution Prevention (P2)
Coordinator

CBFO to manage TRANSCOM

Transportation Tracking and Communication System (TRANSCOM) operators keep a close watch on WIPP shipments from their Albuquerque location. Soon operations will move to Carlsbad.

DOE-EM has directed CBFO to take over administration of the TRANSCOM Communications Center (TCC) now operated and managed in Albuquerque. The decision to move TRANSCOM operations to Carlsbad is part of a larger reorganization within EM.

TRANSCOM was one of many programs previously managed by the National Transportation Program in Albuquerque. The other programs will be managed by EM-11, Office of Transportation in D.C.

CBFO will take over technical oversight of TRANSCOM this month, but the physical transfer of TCC equipment and personnel will not follow until later in the year. TRU Waste Logistics Work Coordinator Casey Gadbury will be the new TRANSCOM program manager once the transfer is complete. Until then, he says he will make periodic trips to the TCC in Albuquerque.

Gadbury sees the TRANSCOM move as an opportunity for improvement. "As I develop the transition plan, I will incorporate user feedback on ways to improve the system's function to make it better," he notes. "We've already identified one area for improvement: continuity of operations and disaster recovery of the system."

Once in Carlsbad, the TCC will be housed in the Skeen-Whitlock Building. Because TRANSCOM's work scope involves far more than tracking WIPP shipments, TCC will remain independent from Central Monitoring Room operations. A second location will also provide an effective backup in communications to the CMR operators.

Albuquerque TCC personnel will be offered the opportunity to continue their positions in Carlsbad. "We would like to encourage the operators to make the move along with the system because they hold invaluable knowledge and experience," says Gadbury.



Albuquerque TRANSCOM operators toured the WIPP underground. Left to right: Ron Womelsdorf, Michael Rohrbacker, Eddy Methola, James Ruffin and Casey Gadbury, CBFO.

Four TRANSCOM operators were interviewed by *TRU TeamWorks* last week on a visit to WIPP. The close-knit group said their talents and areas of expertise are complementary. "As TRANSCOM operators we fill a unique role within a unique system," says operator James Ruffin. "Our pride in our work and our closeness as a group has led us all to seriously consider moving to Carlsbad to continue with the TCC."

"Our final decisions will rest a great deal on the transition plan," adds coworker Eddy Methola. "The plan will explain the final details associated with the move and our new responsibilities." Their families and the community are other considerations.

The operators took a tour of the city and WIPP, where they finally met some of the CMR operators they speak with on a regular basis.

"We hope this group of committed and experienced operators will follow the system down to Carlsbad," notes Gadbury. "Their experience, along with CBFO's desire to improve TRANSCOM, will benefit WIPP and DOE as a whole."

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Scenes from the WIPP site



Randy West, WTS Facility Restoration (left) and Leonard Ingram, EZ Moving, reconfigure a work area in the Skeen Whitlock Building.



Taking a photo break at the WIPP warehouse are L&M employees (from left to right) Pat Allen, David Ramirez and Dora Lopez.

Transportation

What goes around, comes around

What year is it? The Spice Girls and Hanson had top ten songs and Titanic was the top grossing film. WIPP was in a nine-year holding pattern after declaring readiness to receive the nation's transuranic waste. That year, a small-quantity site was cleaned up with the removal of one drum of legacy TRU waste. The single-drum payload was shipped to RFETS for temporary storage, making it the first bona fide TRUPACT-II shipment. Can you guess the year and site?

It was 1997, and the site was Teledyne-Brown located in Westwood, NJ. The single drum had been generated at Rocky Flats and was transported to Teledyne-Brown in 1987 to extract precious metals from the waste.

Stored at Teledyne-Brown for 10 years, the drum was finally returned to RFETS in a TRUPACT-II, using WIPP transportation procedures and protocols. "This was the first time a shipment of transuranic waste had been transported using WIPP protocols," says Ralph Smith, CBFO manager of Institutional Programs.

"There was an enormous amount of coordination before and during this shipment," Smith adds. "It was an excellent test for the WIPP Transportation Plan and proved how effective this plan really is."

The shipment was inspected to today's strict requirements and was tracked across country by TRANSCOM.

Smith continues, "It was much ado about nothing. With the exception of some thunderstorms in Pennsylvania it was a boring deal – just the way we like them."



A photo of the 1997 waste shipment from Teledyne Brown to RFETS.

Not only was the Teledyne Brown shipment a TRUPACT-II first, it was the first time WIPP's mobile loading equipment was used. Teledyne-Brown was not equipped to load the drum, so it was loaded in the facility's parking lot.

The real twist to the story is that, eight years later, this drum will be part of the final TRU shipment to leave Rocky Flats. The last shipment from Rocky Flats is scheduled to depart the facility in April for permanent disposal at WIPP.

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**Washington Group
International**

online company store
available

The official company
store for Washington
Group may be accessed
at

[http://washingtoncompa
nystore.logomall.com/](http://washingtoncompa
nystore.logomall.com/)

The store sells shirts,
vests, jackets, bags and
miscellaneous items
decorated with the
Washington Group logo.

Please note that the
store should only be
accessed during personal
time.

– Submitted by Elisa
Hernandez, WTS Human
Resources

Disposal

What's next for NExA? Pure science

WIPP's North Experimental Area (NExA) is ready for occupancy, thanks to funds set aside for neutrino research in the 2005 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act. Scientists plan to use the renovated area for laboratory experiments that require shielding from cosmic radiation.

Underground crews recently completed trimming the walls, leveling the floor and securing the roof of an existing chamber that was once an underground maintenance shop. Power and lighting were added to the 300-foot-long, 33-foot wide, and 18-foot high room, creating one of the largest underground laboratories now available to science.

To maximize return on taxpayer dollars, Congress provided for additional use of the federally-funded facility in the LWA, on condition that such use would not interfere with WIPP's primary waste disposal mission. In 2001, DOE offered WIPP's available underground space to the scientific community. The repository's depth is suitable for experiments that require extremely low background radiation.

NExA's first occupant is likely to be the Enriched Xenon Experiment (EXO) run by an international consortium and led by Stanford University. The EXO team will use Xenon gas as a detector material to capture neutrino-less double beta decay, a postulated rare nuclear process that occurs when the disintegration of a nucleus is accompanied by emission of two electrons. While this decay mode has never been observed, other physics experiments point to its possibility. A confirmation could revolutionize current concepts about physics and cosmology.

Last month, a team led by University of California scientist David Cline submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation (NSF) to study WIPP's suitability for what it calls the Deep Underground Service and Engineering Laboratory (DUSEL).

NSF will fund up to three sites to develop detailed plans on how they might meet needs for space, underground services, infrastructure and educational outreach that were outlined in an earlier study. However, NSF predicts that it will be several years before DUSEL becomes a reality.

In 2002, Raymond Davis shared the Nobel Prize in physics for underground neutrino research. Perhaps future Nobel Prizes may result from experiments conducted at WIPP.



**NExA is now
available to
scientists.**

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Long-time WIPP employees have suggested that WIPP already has a logo, referring to a logo designed by former WIPP employee Bob Roland in 1982.

His distinctive design incorporated an expanded Zia sun symbol. Roland said he borrowed the idea from the New Mexico state symbol and expanded it to represent a growing and expanding state. He included a radioactive tri-foil in the design to depict the WIPP project.

The logo was used for many years on WIPP documents and WIPP badges, but was not officially adopted for use by WIPP.

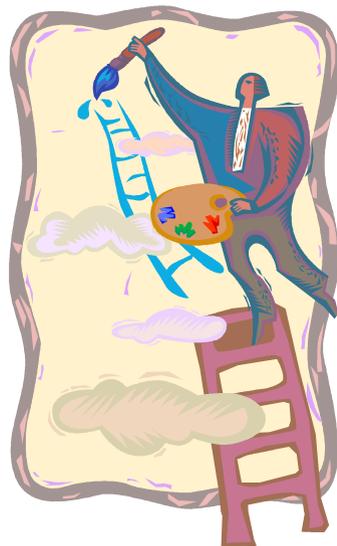
In 1999, the northern New Mexico Zia Tribe brought suit against the state of New Mexico for using the Zia symbol because of its significance to tribal beliefs. While the lawsuit was unsuccessful, in deference to the tribe, WIPP use of the 1982 logo has long since been discouraged.

The search is on

Get in touch with your creative side and join the search for a new WIPP logo and a new WIPP motto.

In our last issue, *TRU TeamWorks* announced upcoming contests designed to find the perfect WIPP logo and motto. The best ideas will undoubtedly come from the people who know WIPP best: WIPP employees.

So let's get started! The logo and motto contests are open to all WIPP project participant employees. All logo and motto submissions will be judged by the *TRU TeamWorks* editorial board, which is comprised of representatives from CBFO, LAN/CB, SNL-CPG, CTAC and WTS. Winners will receive a \$50 prize.



Please note the guidelines below and submit your entries today!

Logo Contest

Submissions may be hand drawn or computer-designed
Submissions can be detailed or conceptual
Color submissions are acceptable, but the work must be reproducible in black and white

Hard copy or electronic formats are acceptable

The design must consist of original work

Submitted designs become the property of the Department of Energy

Employees may enter as many designs as they wish

TRU TeamWorks reserves the right to refuse entries considered inappropriate

Motto Contest

Submitted mottos become the property of the Department of Energy

Employees may enter as many mottos as they wish

TRU TeamWorks reserves the right to refuse entries considered inappropriate

Participants should e-mail electronic submissions to the *TRU TeamWorks* [mailbox](#). Hard copy submissions should be sent to *TRU TeamWorks* at mail stop GSA-104.

Deadline for submissions is 4:30 p.m., Monday, March 21. The winner will be announced in the March 24 issue of *TRU TeamWorks*.

Questions about the contest can be e-mailed to *TRU TeamWorks* via the link above, or may be directed to Kim Greer at Extension 7293.

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Zero is a
real number



Hard hat stickers at WIPP facilities encourage the philosophy of Zero Injuries.

Taking it one day at a time, in the first two months of 2005, there were no recordable injuries at the WIPP and only four minor first aid cases.

Zero is our achievable goal.

Safety lifeline

On the game show "Who Wants to be a Millionaire," contestants are given the option of a lifeline: one phone call to a person who can help them answer the \$1 million question. While Roger Simmons, WTS environmental technician, may not win \$1 million, his idea for improved safety may be worth far more. Simmons' new lifeline is a satellite phone.

Simmons says he and two coworkers spend up to 85 percent of their workday in the field taking air, soil and biotic samples. The field, according to Simmons, ranges as far north as Artesia, to Brantley Dam, and then 12 miles south of WIPP where the environmental control station is located. In addition to taking samples on WIPP's 16 sections and beyond, environmental technicians perform surveillance on oil and gas wells within a mile of WIPP's boundary.

The problem, according to Simmons, was communication. "Because we work alone and in an area where two phone systems (Plateau and Cellular One) overlap, we had no solid communication. There were dead spaces where our bag (mobile) phones just didn't work."



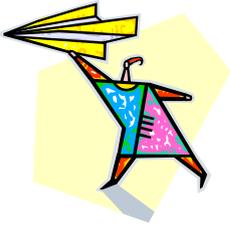
Simmons said he brought concerns about the techs working alone in high hydrogen sulfide areas, on back roads where oil field accidents occur and in wildlife habitats to Cliff Kemp, his Safety Awareness Committee representative. With Kemp's assistance and support from manager Joel Siegel, the group tested several mobile phone systems. Again they encountered dead zones.

However, satellite phones proved to be effective in all locations. The tech's trucks were mounted with satellite antennas and each now has a lifeline. Simmons says he feels more secure. "The safety aspects are 100 percent positive. There are no dead spaces with satellite phones, so we have solid, absolute communication in the event of an emergency."

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Much appreciated

Included in the Our Team section of our last edition of *TRU TeamWorks* was a photo of WIPP mine ventilation engineer Jill Farnsworth, who visited Puckett Elementary School students to talk about careers in engineering.

Farnsworth said she received a large envelope of thank you notes from Puckett's third grade students. She shared this one with *TRU TeamWorks*:

Dear Ms. Farnsworth,
Thank you for coming to Puckett School. Thank you for telling us about your job. It was also fun. If you are still alive maybe we can work together.

Your friend,
Desiree



Birthdays

- Wren Prather-Stroud (RSI) March 11
- Dan Standiford (WTS) March 11
- Stewart Jones (WRES) March 12
- Carolyn Carrillo (WTS) March 15
- Larry Madl (WRES) March 18
- Brad Day (WTS) March 22
- Lorraine Hensley (WTS) March 23
- Kay Atwood (WTS) March 24



WTS March service awards

5 year

- Ricky Whiteley, March 20
- Randy Wilson, March 20
- Chon Armendarez, March 20
- Blas Castaneda, March 20
- Ernest Granado, March 20

15 year

- Robert Sexton, March 15
- Bob Paslay, March 15
- Diana Murray, March 15
- Robert Schutt, March 26



IFMS requisitioner training

Procurement and Project Analysis and Control Groups will hold refresher training for IFMS requisitioners. Training will focus on new functionality, the importance of correct information, how requisition information shows up on reports and how to track requisition status within the system.

In addition, the training will reinforce the correct process to follow when creating a requisition to ensure a smooth transition through the financial process. Attendees will receive an updated desktop manual. The class will last approximately one hour.

Skeen-Whitlock Building, T-121
Tuesday, March 15 at 8:00 a.m. and again at 9:30 a.m.

WIPP site, Training Room 2
Tuesday, March 15 at 1:00 p.m. and again 2:30 p.m.

Contact Sue Bradley, Extension 7421 by noon Monday, March 14th to sign up.

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