

## WIPP Quick Facts (As of 4-18-11)

### 9,453

Shipments received since opening  
(8,983 CH and 470 RH)

### 74,022

Cubic meters of waste disposed  
(73,781 CH and 241 RH)

### 143,240

Containers disposed in the underground  
(142,772 CH and 468 RH)

## WIPP reaches 12 years of safe operations



It's hard to believe, but it has now been a dozen years since WIPP received its first shipment of transuranic (TRU) waste. The underground repository marked its 12-year anniversary of operations on Saturday, March 26, 2011.

"WIPP employees and members of the community cheered when the first shipment of TRU waste arrived here in 1999," said Acting Carlsbad Field Office Manager Ed Ziemianski. "I applaud their continued dedication to our nation, which has placed its trust in WIPP to maintain those rigorous safety standards that made its opening possible."

Since WIPP opened in 1999, more than 73,000 cubic meters of legacy TRU waste have been removed from temporary locations around the nation and shipped to WIPP for permanent underground disposal, and DOE has completed legacy TRU waste cleanup from 17 sites around the country. To date, WIPP drivers have traveled more than 11 million loaded miles and transported more than 9,400 shipments to WIPP.

"There were many people involved in the making of this 12th anniversary milestone, and we appreciate the contributions of everyone associated with WIPP's success," Ziemianski said. "It's a collective tribute to all those involved, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, New Mexico Environment Department, communities across the state, CBFO and DOE Headquarters employees, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Sandia National Laboratories, state, county and local emergency response personnel along the transportation routes, and contractors—especially Washington TRU Solutions LLC, the WIPP management and operating contractor."

In its 12th year of operations, WIPP will continue to lead efforts to reduce the nation's nuclear footprint. During the upcoming year, WIPP expects to receive its 10,000th shipment and to begin shipments of large boxed waste in the TRUPACT-III, a new shipping package scheduled for delivery this summer.

On the disposal side of the project, WIPP will complete waste emplacement in Panel 5 of its underground repository. The panels in WIPP's underground each consist of seven waste disposal rooms that are 300 feet long, 33 feet wide and 13 feet high. Panel 6 has just begun receiving RH waste.

## New forklifts being put to use at WIPP



CH-TRU waste handler Jay Funderburk uses one of two new 13-ton forklifts recently purchased with American Reinvestment and Recovery Act funds to load an empty TRUPACT-II shipping container onto a trailer in the transportation container storage area.

## WIPP receives 100,000th 55-gallon drum



The 100,000th 55-gallon waste drum was disposed underground at WIPP in March. About 70 percent of the approximately 142,000 waste containers disposed to date are 55-gallon drums.

While three 55-gallon drums of remote-handled TRU waste will fit inside the RH-72B shipping package, most of the waste that arrives at WIPP is contact-handled TRU waste. Typically, 14 55-gallon drums are shipped inside the TRUPACT-II, the workhorse of WIPP's shipping fleet. CH-TRU waste also is shipped in 100-gallon drums, standard waste boxes, 10-drum overpacks and 85-gallon drums.

## RH disposal begins in Panel 6



The horizontal emplacement and retrieval equipment is staged in Room 7 of Panel 6.

Remote-handled waste disposal has begun in Panel 6 in the WIPP underground. The RH-TRU waste disposal equipment was moved out of Room 1 of Panel 5 on March 21 and into Room 7 of Panel 6.

"We are moving right along in our disposal plan," RH-TRU waste handling crew manager Andy Cooper said. "We were able to safely transition RH-TRU waste from Panel 5 to Panel 6. CH-TRU waste disposal operations will be moving into Room 1 shortly and the closure of another disposal panel is in sight."

Here is an estimated breakdown of the number of other CH-TRU waste containers received at WIPP:

- 55-gallon drums – 101,000
- 100-gallon drums – 26,300
- Standard waste boxes – 9,400
- 10-drum overpacks – 5,400
- 85-gallon drums – 5

Until now, Panels 4 and 5 were the only panels where RH waste was emplaced for permanent disposal. RH-TRU waste disposal did not begin until 2007, eight years after the first CH-TRU waste shipment arrived to officially open WIPP. CH-TRU waste is still being disposed in Panel 5 and operations will be moved into Room 1 of Panel 5 next month. To date, WIPP has received 470 total RH-TRU waste shipments from six different generator sites.

There are two categories of TRU waste. CH-TRU waste can be handled by workers under controlled conditions without any shielding other than the container itself. CH-TRU waste will account for approximately 96 percent of the total volume of waste to be disposed at WIPP. The remaining four percent will be RH-TRU waste, which emits more penetrating radiation than CH-TRU waste and must be handled and transported in lead-shielded casks.

#### 4th Annual Mine Health and Safety Conference Scheduled

Registration for the 4th Annual Mine Health and Safety Conference is ongoing. This year's conference will be at the Macey Conference Center from May 2-4 in Socorro, NM.

The conference theme is "Focus 24/7", recognizing that health and safety is a way of life and a value in the New Mexico mining industry.

Click [here](#) for a registration form.

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## Completion of RH-TRU Shipping Campaign Celebrated

Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) Acting Manager Ed Ziemianski had special cause to celebrate when one campaign for cleaning up remote-handled transuranic (RH-TRU) was concluded in March.

On March 10, the 216th and final target shipment of RH-TRU waste under the Idaho Cleanup Project's contract with the U.S. Department of Energy was sent to WIPP. The first RH-TRU shipment was sent from the Idaho Nuclear Technology and Engineering Center (INTEC) on Jan. 18, 2007.



**The final RH shipment from the Idaho Cleanup Project campaign arrives at WIPP.**

"This significant milestone is uniquely rewarding to me," noted Ziemianski. "I actually authored the clause for the RH-TRU portion of the statement of work that was incorporated into the Idaho Cleanup Project contract in 2005. Now, in March 2011, I can watch the final shipment of that target-scope waste arrive safely and compliantly at WIPP."

All together, an estimated 640 drums of RH-TRU were shipped to WIPP during the four-year target campaign. Additional RH-TRU waste will be shipped from Idaho during other campaigns.

"There were many people involved in making this project successful, including dedicated federal staff and management, highly creative contractor staff, state and federal regulators, community leaders, tribes and transportation experts and inspectors," Ziemianski added.



**CBFO Legal Counsel  
George Hellstrom**

## Hellstrom receives “Green Socks” award

It was fitting that Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) Legal Counsel George Hellstrom received the “Green Socks” award right before St. Patrick’s Day this year, but it wasn’t because he was strongly supporting the Irish holiday. Actually, the “Green Socks” award was given to him by the Department of Energy (DOE) General Counsel for significant accomplishments and legal efforts by DOE attorneys at DOE Headquarters and in the field offices.

Hellstrom was nominated because of his work on the recent 10-year WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit (HWFP) renewal process. The permit renewal process included extensive negotiations between the New Mexico Environment Department and WIPP officials. Hellstrom was a vital part of all negotiation sessions, mainly addressing stakeholder interests and concerns. The WIPP HWFP was issued in November and implemented on December 30, 2010.

Hellstrom was one of two award recipients nominated by the Environmental Management Consolidated Business Center throughout the DOE complex. All nominations were reviewed by DOE Headquarters General Counsel Scott Blake Harris.

“I am honored to receive this award from the DOE General Counsel,” Hellstrom said. “The permit renewal process was a team effort involving many people from both CBFO and Washington TRU Solutions.”

### Interested in WIPP?

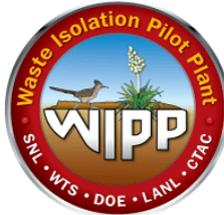
If you would like to be notified when TRU TeamWorks is updated with the latest information about WIPP, send an email message to: [TRUTeamWorks@wipp.ws](mailto:TRUTeamWorks@wipp.ws).

Green socks were associated with Scott Blake Harris and eventually became his “trademark” for the office. For Hellstrom, the award came with recognition from the DOE Headquarters General Counsel Office, a certificate and, of course, a pair of green socks.

The U.S. Department of Energy  
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

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