

## WIPP Quick Facts (As of 11-20-11)

### 10,180

Shipments received since opening  
(9,648 CH and 532 RH)

### 79,169

Cubic meters of waste disposed  
(78,903 CH and 266 RH)

### 154,336

Containers disposed in the  
underground  
(153,808 CH and 528 RH)

## Joe Franco named CBFO manager

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Richland Operations Office (RL) Assistant Manager for the River Corridor Joe Franco was selected as Manager for the Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO), which oversees the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP).

CBFO Deputy Manager Ed Ziemianski has been acting in the CBFO Manager's position for the past year and will continue to serve as Deputy Manager. In operation since 1999, WIPP is a DOE facility designed to safely isolate defense-related transuranic (TRU) waste from people and the environment.



Since 2006, Franco was responsible for cleanup and restoration of the 220 square miles of the Columbia River Corridor, which includes former plutonium production reactors and fuel fabrication, research and support facilities, at the Hanford Site, Washington. Prior to his DOE RL position, Franco worked in numerous management positions from 1989 to 2006 for Washington TRU Solutions (WTS), LLC -- formerly Westinghouse TRU Solutions, LLC prior to the company's name change in 2003. WTS is the WIPP management and operating contractor.

"Joe, a native of Carlsbad, New Mexico, brings a wealth of experience to the job, including over 25 years of nuclear experience," said Acting Assistant Secretary for DOE Environmental Management Dave Huizenga. "Joe is no stranger to the site as he previously worked as a contractor for WTS for 17 years. As Manager of CBFO, he'll lead the development and implementation of WIPP's vision, priorities and program policies for the TRU waste management program mission for the DOE."

Franco said he looks forward to returning to Carlsbad and WIPP and facilitating further TRU waste deinventory. WIPP is America's only deep geologic repository for the permanent disposal of defense-generated TRU waste generated from the research and production of nuclear weapons. TRU 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.

"My experience at both Hanford and WIPP allows me to help further the Department's TRU waste management program as cleanup across the nation is completed," said Franco. "Born and raised in the Carlsbad area, I welcome the opportunity to build relationships and work with communities throughout New Mexico and other states with interest in WIPP."

"I'd also like to thank Ed who has done an outstanding job ensuring that WIPP operations continued seamlessly, leading the site's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act efforts and achieving the 10,000th safe shipment of TRU waste to WIPP," said Huizenga. "I'm confident that together Joe and Ed will be a dynamic and effective leadership team at Carlsbad."

"I'm pleased to have served as the DOE CBFO Interim Manager this past year. I look forward to continuing service as the Deputy Manager with Joe and the CBFO and WIPP Team as we continue our mission and progress with reducing the nation's nuclear waste footprint safely, compliantly and efficiently," said Ziemianski.

The DOE created the Carlsbad Area Office in late 1993 to lead the nation's TRU waste disposal efforts. In September 2000, the office was elevated in status to

become CBFO, taking on new responsibilities. The CBFO coordinates the TRU program at waste-generating sites, national laboratories, and other participants involved in characterizing and disposing of TRU waste at the WIPP site located 26 miles southeast of Carlsbad, New Mexico

### City, state and federal officials congratulate WIPP employees

The 10,000th shipment receipt of WIPP did not go unnoticed by officials at all levels of government. Below are photos from a commemorative event at the site.



Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management accepts a proclamation from City Councilors Dick Doss and Janell Whitlock and Carlsbad Mayor Dale Janway.



New Mexico Environment Department Secretary David Martin.



Huizenga visits with U.S. Congressman Steve Pearce.



URS Washington TRU Solutions President and General Manager Farok Sharif and Interim Carlsbad Field Office Manager Ed Ziemianski.

## WIPP receives 10,000th shipment



Paul Paneral checks the 10,000th shipment prior to entering the site. The shipment consisted of contact-handled waste shipped in two TRUPACT-II and one HalfPACT shipping packages.

The U.S. Department of Energy's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) marked an important milestone in the mission to clean up the Cold War legacy transuranic (TRU) waste when it received its 10,000th shipment of TRU waste on September 24.

The 10,000th shipment, which consisted of defense-generated contact-handled TRU waste, arrived at WIPP Saturday evening in a TRUPACT-II shipping package. The shipment came from the DOE's Idaho site, which has accounted for nearly half of the shipments WIPP has received.

WIPP's first shipment came from Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico. Other milestone shipments have included the first shipment of remote-handled waste in 2007, the final shipment from the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site in 2005 and the first shipment using the new TRUPACT-III package.

"There were many people involved in the making of this 10,000th shipment milestone and more than 12 million safe miles; we appreciate the contributions of everyone associated with WIPP's success," said CBFO Interim Manager Ed Ziemianski. "It's a collective tribute to all those involved, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, New Mexico Environment Department, communities across the states, CBFO and DOE Headquarters employees, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Sandia National Laboratories, the generator sites whose employees characterize and certify the waste before it is shipped, state, county and local emergency response personnel along the transportation routes, the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance, State Police, Departments of Public Safety and those involved with WIPP truck inspections, Tribes and Pueblos, the Western Governors' Association and contractors - especially Washington TRU Solutions LLC, the WIPP management and operating contractor, whose employees ensure the waste is emplaced safely and compliantly. We were able to achieve this milestone because of the integration among all team members."

Since its opening, WIPP has received and disposed of more than 79,000 cubic meters of defense-related TRU waste from locations around the country.

"We have a hard working group of people dedicated to the safety of their colleagues, the public and the environment who have processed each one of these 10,000

shipments as if it were the first,” said Farok Sharif, president and general manager of URS Washington TRU Solutions, the WIPP management and operating contractor. “I am extremely proud of this accomplishment and applaud the efforts of everyone involved.”

## Legacy TRU waste cleanup completed at additional sites



File Photo

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has successfully completed cleanup of all Cold War legacy transuranic (TRU) waste at 21 sites. Two of the most recent sites include the Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory (BAPL) near Pittsburgh, Pa. and Argonne National Laboratory (ANL) near Chicago, Ill.

BAPL remote-handled (RH) TRU waste was shipped to WIPP, making BAPL the seventh site within the DOE complex to ship RH-TRU waste. Fifteen 55-gallon drums of RH-TRU waste were removed from BAPL between Sept. 19 and 21 using RH-72B shipping packages, which can hold three 55-gallon drums. The last shipment of RH-TRU waste from BAPL arrived at WIPP on Sept. 23

ANL reached a similar milestone on September 30. In all, the DOE has removed a total of 112 shipments of TRU waste from ANL. While all legacy TRU waste has been removed, additional shipments of newly generated waste is expected from Argonne over the next year.

This summer, TRU waste cleanup was also completed at the Nuclear Radiation Development, LLC, a commercial facility that supported historic DOE missions near Grand Island, N.Y., and the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory in Berkeley, Calif. These milestones were all achieved using funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to expedite legacy waste cleanup activities across the DOE complex.

TRU waste consists of materials contaminated with radioactive elements that have atomic numbers greater than uranium, including tools, rags, protective clothing, sludge and soil. WIPP's mission includes the safe disposal of two types of TRU waste, RH and Contact-Handled (CH). CH-TRU waste can be handled by workers without any other additional shielding than the container itself. RH-TRU waste emits more penetrating radiation than CH-TRU waste and must be handled and transported in lead-shielded casks.

### Pinzel and Sobieraj join CBFO staff



Pinzel

Marcus Pinzel has joined the Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) as Remote Handled (RH) TRU Waste Certification Manager. He transferred to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant from the Department of Energy's Idaho Field Office, where he was the Deputy Federal Project Director for the Radioactive Waste Management Complex (RWMC) and had oversight on the targeted waste remediation. Marcus has more than 20 years experience in government and private sector work and is retired from the U.S. Army. He graduated from Texas A&M University with a Master of Science degree in Geology, and is a Licensed Professional Geologist in Texas.



**Sobieraj**

Josef Sobieraj arrived at CBFO this year and was hired as the CBFO Safety Engineer. He's an interdisciplinary Engineer (Ph.D from University of Cincinnati College of Engineering) and Scientist (BA and MS in Geology) who currently holds Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH) and Professional Geologist (PG) credentials and is working towards a Certified Safety Professional (CSP) credential. Josef has diverse national and international work experience in academia, government, and private sectors.



## **EM Analytical Services Program Reports Success in First Year of Comeback**

When a powerful earthquake and tsunami struck Japan in March, Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, N.M., was involved in DOE efforts to respond to the disasters.

As a partner in the National Analytical Management Program (NAMP), Sandia provided radioanalytical services in support of analysis efforts in the wake of the earthquake and tsunami. Sandia also provided a list of DOE laboratories and their capabilities for quick identification of a lab capable of providing radiological analysis.

Sandia's involvement in the disaster response efforts highlights NAMP's success since EM directed the Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) to reestablish the program last summer. EM previously sponsored NAMP to coordinate analytical services and capabilities throughout DOE, but the program was curtailed many years ago.

Today, NAMP offers a centralized hub for analytical resources within the DOE complex. The program assists in the standardization of methods and provides a mechanism to coordinate receipt and analysis of samples from outside agencies. NAMP also establishes reimbursement mechanisms for services.

"We're pleased that CBFO can lead the DOE NAMP initiative," said CBFO Interim Manager Ed Ziemianski. "The program streamlines an important process for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the DOE laboratories. Its cohesive network approach indicates that even more benefits will be gained with the potential for increased application."

NAMP Manager and CBFO Senior Strategist Oba Vincent said he looks forward to NAMP building on its success from the first year, especially with DOE's radiological capabilities.

"There is a national shortage of radiological laboratories," Vincent said. "With the federal agencies, there isn't the capability to deal with radiological emergencies without DOE labs being brought in. The program will be able supply that need."

Reestablishing NAMP also led to the creation of a DOE coordination office at CBFO for the EPA Environmental Response Laboratory Network (ERLN), which provides analytical needs during large-scale responses to emergency situations. That step allowed for a central point of contact for EPA and DOE laboratories that work together. NAMP will coordinate complex-wide voluntary ERLN membership.

ERLN is a component of the Integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks, which offers a nationwide, integrated system of laboratory networks to assist in response to acts of terrorism and other events. The consortium was established in 2005 through an agreement of 10 federal agencies, including DOE and EPA.

That agreement assigns joint responsibilities to EPA and DOE for radiological analysis. NAMP also allows EPA to access DOE capabilities in a national emergency. NAMP serves on multiple ICLN technical committees to ensure that the impacts of interagency standardization are understood and consistent with EM goals.

## WIPP receives mine operator of the year award



**WIPP representatives accepted the Mine Operator of the Year Award on behalf of all WIPP employees at the annual New Mexico Mining Association meeting. Above (l to r), Justin Kirkes (WTS), Don Galbraith (CBFO), Dave Sjomeling (WTS), Don Purvis (New Mexico Mining Association) and Terrance Foreback, New Mexico State Mine Inspector.**

The safety-first attitude at URS Washington TRU Solutions, LLC (WTS) has resulted in top accolades from New Mexico's key mining organizations. The New Mexico Mining Association (NMMA) and the NM State Bureau of Mine Safety recently presented WTS with their Safe Operator of the Year Award. WTS has managed and operated the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant for the U.S. Department of Energy for more than 23 years.

"I'm pleased to congratulate Washington TRU Solutions and the WIPP workforce for receiving the state's top mine safety award for 23 of the past 25 years," said Ed Ziemianski, Carlsbad Field Office Interim Manager. "It's also significant that 10 individual WTS work groups are also being recognized for zero injuries. Safety is the cornerstone for everything we do at WIPP, so these awards are further indicators of the exceptional safety culture that exists here."

"Our employees are the best in the business," said WTS President and General Manager Farok Sharif. "I'm very pleased to see our employees being recognized for their daily and extensive efforts toward keeping WIPP safe."

WTS has been a recipient of NMMA's top safety award for 23 of the past 25 years. The competition is based on an evaluation of the injury rate between July 2010 and June 2011.

"WIPP's contribution to the mining safety in New Mexico is highly valued by mine safety professionals across the state," said NMMA Safety Committee Chairman Randy Logsdon. "WIPP's outstanding example and safety record just lends additional credibility to mine safety initiatives throughout New Mexico."

Ten groups within WTS were also recognized individually for having a zero injury rate. The groups were: Hoisting Operations, Mine Maintenance, Mining Operations, Underground Services, Instrumentation and Control Maintenance, Facility Restoration Maintenance, Facility Operations, Contact-Handled Waste Handlers, Remote-Handled Waste Handlers and Radiological Control.

The awards were given at the annual meeting of the New Mexico Mining Association

held this year in Bernalillo, N.M. Repository Projects Manager Dave Sjomeling accepted the awards on behalf of WTS employees.

WTS crews recently completed mining activities in Panel 7. Each panel at WIPP contains seven football-field-length disposal rooms. Disposal operations are currently underway in Panel 6.

## CBFO participates in Feds Feed Families initiative



Heidi Lowe and David Hoffer prepare to bring fruits and vegetables into the Carlsbad Community Kitchen as part of a national “Feds Feed Families” initiative. Federal employees of the Department of Energy’s Carlsbad Field Office recently donated a whopping 1,910 pounds of food to the community kitchen.

All together, DOE strove to collect more than 132,000 pounds of food and supplies during the federal government’s third annual “Feds Feed Families” campaign. Federal employees across the nation worked toward a national goal of collecting 2 million pounds of canned vegetables and fruits, flour, sugar, rice, beans, salt, pepper, pasta, soap and other supplies.

The Carlsbad Community Kitchen is located at 402 S. Alameda St. For more information, call 885-4174.

### 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).

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

Please send comments and/or  
suggestions to: [TRU TeamWorks](mailto:TRUTeamWorks)

