

## WIPP Quick Facts (As of 11-5-09)

### 8,002

Shipments received since opening  
(7,702 CH and 300 RH)

### 63,971

Cubic meters of waste disposed  
(63,828 CH and 143 RH)

### 124,386

Containers disposed in the underground  
(124,093 CH and 293 RH)

## WIPP receives 8000th TRU waste shipment



**The 8,000th shipment arrives at WIPP late Wednesday night. The two drivers, Phil Godin, left, and Jack Clayton stand next to the truck as it is inspected by Security. The shipment came to WIPP from Los Alamos National Laboratory.**

Eight thousand shipments and counting...

This week, WIPP received its 8,000th shipment of defense-related transuranic (TRU) waste. The milestone shipment from Los Alamos National Laboratory will be safely and permanently disposed in WIPP's underground repository.

Another milestone shipment arrived at WIPP just hours after the 8,000th. The 300th shipment of remote-handled transuranic (RH-TRU) waste arrived at WIPP in the early morning hours of Thursday, November 5. This shipment originated from the Vallecitos Nuclear Center in California. The dual accomplishments highlight the accelerated national cleanup efforts made possible through American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.

Most of WIPP's 8,000 shipments were contact-handled TRU waste, which does not require shielding to safely handle, transport and emplace. The 300 canisters of RH-TRU waste have been shipped in shielded casks and emplaced within the walls of the underground repository due to their higher radiation dose rates.

Every WIPP shipment of TRU waste meets all U.S. Department of Transportation requirements and WIPP's drivers must pass stringent training requirements. Shipment protocols were developed through cooperative efforts with states, tribal governments and the U.S. Department of Energy. Shipments are also monitored via satellite at all times. To date, WIPP drivers have logged more than 9 million miles without a serious injury or release of radioactive material.

WIPP celebrated 10 years of safe operations this year and completion of TRU waste cleanup at 15 generator sites in 12 states. The first shipment to WIPP in 1999 was also from Los Alamos National Laboratory in northern New Mexico.

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## Agreement Reached Between WTS and Union Employees

Washington TRU Solutions (WTS) and United Steel Workers Union representatives have reached agreement on a new two-year contract through September 2011.

WTS employs over 250 union-represented employees. They perform key operational duties, such as waste handling, facility operations and maintenance, radiological protection and mining at WIPP.

“Frankly, we’re elated with the outcome. We have an important mission to accomplish and we do it best when we work as a team,” said Farok Sharif, WTS president and general manager.

A four-year contract between WTS and union-represented workers expired September 30, but was extended through October 14 to allow for further negotiations. Following a final round of talks, Union members agreed to accept the new contract by a majority vote, avoiding any work stoppage.

“I am proud of the work that was done on both sides of the negotiation table,” Sharif said of the contract agreement. He said the new contract ratified by union members benefits both parties.

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## Veterans Day Flag Raising Celebration

On Tuesday, November 10, the CBFO will welcome the Carlsbad Veterans Honor Guard to the Skeen-Whitlock Building for a flag-raising ceremony. The event commemorates Veterans Day holiday the following day.

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## Paint the Project Pink



**In recognition of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, WIPP employees donned their pink attire for Paint the Project Pink day. Above (back row l to r) Stoller Manager Brian Marshall, Bridgette Spencer, Pat Charlet, Cathy Yates and Mike Fox. Front (l to r) Farah Coleman, Lisa Acosta and Linda Castro.**

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## Computers for Learning program puts past WIPP computers to good use

Computers that were once used at DOE's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in Carlsbad, N.M. are now benefitting children in area schools.

It's all part of the federal Computers for Learning (CFL) program, which directs agencies to assist schools and accredited educational nonprofit organizations with the donation of excess computers and equipment such as computer desks, printers and projectors.



**Children from Jefferson Montessori Academy put old WIPP computers to good use within the computer lab. These excess computers were donated to area schools as part of the Computers for Learning Program.**

According to Ellen Harkness, WIPP property manager, reports of the donations are filed annually with the Environmental Management Consolidated Business Center. During FY 2008, WIPP gave equipment with an acquisition cost of \$12,000 to Carlsbad's Jefferson Montessori Academy (JMA). In FY2009, excess educational equipment with an acquisition value of \$17,806 was given to St. Edwards School and JMA in Carlsbad.

"Jefferson Montessori Academy was thrilled to receive the donated computers," said Cindy Holguin, JMA's chief executive officer. "We would like to express our sincere appreciation to WIPP and their employees who have improved the instructional and daily quality of our lives. In the future, WIPP can be proud to say that not only did they meet their core mission they also improved the community in which they lived."

Holguin said the donation will help students develop the technological skills necessary to compete effectively in business, industry and social interactions. Equipment is used in a dedicated computer lab that provides equal access for instructional use to all students.

Any accredited school qualifies to participate in the CFL program, Harkness said. Local schools from Carlsbad, as well as surrounding communities have benefitted from the program. The computers are cleared of all information prior to being donated.

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## Randy Chatfield receives certification

Randy Chatfield (WTS) recently achieved certification as a Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP). To obtain certification, he was required to pass a six-hour test that demonstrated his knowledge in ten areas:

- z Access control systems and methodology
- z Applications and systems development security
- z Business continuity planning and disaster recovery planning
- z Cryptography
- z Law, investigation and ethics
- z Operations security
- z Security architecture and models
- z Security management practices
- z Telecommunications and network security

The CISSP designation is a globally recognized standard of achievement.

Congratulations to Randy on this accomplishment.

## WIPP works with new NMJC program

A new program affiliated with New Mexico Junior College (NMJC) is designed to prepare students to work at WIPP and other high-tech facilities in southeastern New Mexico.

The college's new dual credit renewable energy program currently has 13 Lea County high school students participating, said Phillip Roybal, the director for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) program at NMJC in Hobbs. True to its name, the program offers the high school students additional college credits.

"This has been in the works now for awhile," Roybal said. "We have a consortium that is made up of county high schools, their superintendents and NMJC administrators, which has recently approved a renewable energy dual credit program."

Norbert Rempe, WTS principal engineer and geologist with WIPP, spoke to students at the NMJC campus in August.

"I talked to them a little bit about WIPP and how I got to where I am," Rempe said. "I talked to them about what other career opportunities are available at WIPP. They were glad to hear about it."

Other WIPP employees, including members of the human resources and engineering departments, will also speak to the career explorations class.

Roybal said the program seeks to take advantage of the fact that facilities such as WIPP and the National Enrichment Facility (NEF) are nearby.

"We are trying to not only accentuate WIPP, Waste Control Specialists, NEF and all of these things that surround us, but we're also able to see what careers are available in the industry. We're growing so much in these areas."

The program will also assist regional projects, such as WIPP, by creating workers with a better knowledge base.

"We want to be able to fill the needs of the companies in the area," he said. Currently, all participating students attend Jal or Lovington high schools. But Roybal says the program will start early enough before the next semester to attract students from Eunice, Hobbs and Tatum.

"This year is basically a pilot for us," he said. "Any time you start a new program like this, you have some wrinkles you've got to work out. For the most part it's going really well, and we feel really good about it."

The program also prepares students for NMJC's energy technology associate's degree. Roybal said the energy technology degree is designed to help prepare interested students for work in the region's energy sector, as well as those currently employed in the field.

"One of the things we're working on is allowing people at WIPP credit hours (toward the degree) for work and Department of Energy (training) classes they've gone through," he said. "We really want to work with people in the industry and help them."

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## Fair promotes WIPP safety



**Safety and Health Manager Tim Rotert (left), Communications Manager Susan Scott and Price Anderson Amendment Act Coordinator Shane Hendrickson cook lunch at the Skeen-Whitlock Building.**

Multiple booths were on display and employees were out in full force for the WIPP safety fair.

The fair was a two day event. The first day was held in town at the Skeen-Whitlock Building, while the second day was at the site.

The theme for this year's fair was sports. The employee booths offered sport activities and competitions that included basketball, softball and golf.

Participants were able to win prizes by answering safety questions, doing a safety questionnaire and trying their skills at the various games at each display.

The managers did their part once again, cooking lunch for the employees both days of the event.



**Sam Fierro and Bertha Cassingham at the prize table**

The safety fair was organized by the WTS Safety Awareness Committee and was open to all WIPP organizations. The fair is put on annually by the Committee to promote and reinforce WIPP's safety culture.

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## New Executive Order Promotes Sustainability

On October 5, 2009, President Obama signed into effect a new executive order. Executive Order 13514, *Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance*. The order requires federal agencies to become leaders in sustainable practices by increasing energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, conserving water resources, recycling, minimizing waste, implementing sustainable building practices for new and existing buildings, and purchasing environmentally preferable goods and services.

## Security Walls receives VPP Star of Excellence Award



**Pictured above: Security Walls Manager Richard De Los Santos (right) and Clint Cassingham hold the VPP Star of Excellence Award at the Guard and Security Building.**

Security Walls LLC has received the DOE's Volunteer Protection Program's (VPP) Star of Excellence Award. Security Walls is the security contractor at WIPP. They received the award for maintaining injury rates 75 percent below industry standards.

Richard De Los Santos, Security Walls manager, said receiving the VPP Star was a primary goal for his organization this year. Security Walls became the WIPP security contractor in April 2008 and, since then, has received VPP Star Status and the Star of Excellence. Both awards are given out for excellence in worksite safety and health.

"Receiving this award validates our efforts and helps establish our team," De Los Santos said. "This could not have been a successful effort without the commitment and participation of our employees."

So what's the next level achievement? If Security Walls receives this award for three consecutive years, the company could receive Legacy Status, which is the highest level of recognition in VPP.

With that goal in mind, De Los Santos emphasized that it takes a team effort with all employees working safely.

"We remain committed to the safety of our workers and the VPP program," De Los Santos said. "I want to add that guidance and support from WTS was instrumental in our success. I want to specifically recognize Clint Cassingham, our safety coordinator, for his leadership and contributions, as well as Juanita Walls, our CEO, for her support and commitment."

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## WIPP's Emergency Response Team Competes



**Members of the Emergency Response Team render aid during the rescue team evaluation on Colo. Above are WIPP ERT members (l to r) Craig Heine, Darren Easley and Albert Castillo.**

Eight members of WIPP's Emergency Response Team (ERT) recently traveled to Snowmass, Colo. for a rescue team evaluation, sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Coal Mining Institute (RMCMI).

The team was evaluated in the following areas: medical, hazmat, confined space, high angle rescue, incident command, rescuer safety and communications. The evaluations help team members to hone their individual and team skills received so that they will be ready to respond effectively in an actual emergency.

As part of the competition, the team had to overcome many obstacles such as working in confined, dark spaces; communications; accessing patients, and the raising and lowering of rescuers and patients.

The WIPP team demonstrated an excellent level of competence with a final cumulative score of 98 percent for all events.

A total of nine teams participated in this year's evaluation. Teams from Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Texas and Wyoming competed in the event.

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

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