

## WIPP Quick Facts

(As of 05-10-06)

**4,591**

Shipments received since opening

**37,785**

Cubic meters of waste disposed

**78,023**

Containers disposed in the underground

## Where can you take toner cartridges for recycling?

Thanks to WIPP's procurement staff, WIPP has contracted to recycle used printer and copier toner cartridges with a single vendor. The contracted vendor makes a monthly pickup of used toner cartridges from two designated collection sites: the Skeen-Whitlock Building receiving area and the site warehouse.

To recycle toner cartridges, employees should simply put the used cartridge in the box, tape it closed and take it to one of the designated collection sites.

Submitted by **Judy McLemore**,  
P2 Coordinator

## State Mine Inspector and MSHA visit WIPP

"We will do whatever it takes to ensure that people go home safely every day," says New Mexico State Mine Inspector Rebecca Boam. Boam and Eddie Lopez, district manager for the South Central Region of the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration, visited area potash mines and WIPP last week to talk "mine safety."



WTS employee Kevin McIlwee accepts a certificate of appreciation on behalf of WIPP and all employees. Pictured l to r: Don Galbraith (CBFO), Subhash Sethi (WTS), Eddie Lopez (MSHA), McIlwee and State Mine Inspector Rebecca Boam.

The two toured Intrepid May 1 and spoke with local potash miners and operators. On Tuesday they traveled to Mosaic's No. 5 shaft, and then made the rounds of Mosaic's main shop and production areas delivering their safety message. "We've combined efforts (state and federal) to reach out to miners and operators," said Boam.

Last Wednesday, WIPP miners gathered in the underground lunchroom to welcome the officials. Lopez, whose district covers metal/nonmetal mines in a six-state region, commended miners on their safety record. "The mines in this region conduct business 365 days a year, 99.9% of the time without an injury. I believe in zero (injuries)." According to Lopez, there have been some fatalities in metal/nonmetal mines this year. "We must remember and learn from these accidents."

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## Interested in saving gasoline?

In recognition of National Bike to Work Day and National Bike Month (May), Chad Twitchell (SNL-CPG) invites any interested and motivated in-town WIPP employees to join him riding bikes to and from work on Wednesday, May 17 for Sandia's Annual Bike to Work Day.

If great weather and good exercise aren't enough to motivate you, what about the high cost of gas? Even though this is a voluntary program, remember that safety is still key! Click [here](#) for some helpful safety information from the president of the Sandia Bicycle Commuters Group based in Albuquerque.

If you have any questions, please contact Chad Twitchell at 234-0042.

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Eddie Lopez, district manager for the south central region of MSHA addresses employees underground.



Lopez encouraged miners to use the “SLAM” decision tool – **S**top, **L**ook, **A**nalyze and **M**anage – to mitigate the daily risks associated with mining. Comparing the workday decisions of miners to high-level corporate executives, he noted that while an executive's poor decision can cost his company millions, a miner has far more at stake. “Identify the risks and manage them,” he challenged.

WIPP miner Kevin McIlwee accepted a certificate of appreciation on behalf of WIPP employees for working with MSHA and state government to promote workplace safety. To miners' applause, McIlwee said, “I can tell you WIPP is a safe place to work. We'll display it proudly.”



State Mine Inspector Rebecca Boam talking about mine safety.

Boam also discussed House Bill 687 and encouraged miners to get involved. We need to work together to get it right.” The legislation, signed by Governor Richardson in March, calls for new safety measures for New Mexico's underground mines, including requirements for self-contained self-rescuers and mine communications systems to assist miners in emergency situations.

From WIPP, Boam and Lopez took their safety campaign to the MolyCorp mine in Questa, NM.

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## Happy Birthday Wishes!

**Steve Kouba (WRES)**  
May 1

**Brenda Buttrey (WTS)**  
May 2

**Debra Medina (CTAC)**  
May 2

Lois George (WTS)  
May 5

Michael Gerle (WTS)  
May 6

Cindy Woodin (WTS)  
May 7

Mario Carrasco (WTS)  
May 8

Tricia Proctor (WTS)  
May 20

Is your birthday on our list? Employee birthdays are submitted once and must be re-approved for publication by you every year. Please submit birth dates to the TRU TeamWorks staff at: [TRUTeamWorks@wipp.ws](mailto:TRUTeamWorks@wipp.ws).

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## Panel 2 Closure

WTS project manager Gary Morrison declared Panel 2's 12-foot-thick isolation wall complete March 31. Morrison says Steve Phillips of Phillips Mining, Geotechnical & Grouting, Inc. inspected the wall and will review construction and quality assurance packages before generating a final engineering file for WTS.

Phillips, who certified the construction of Panel 1's isolation wall, said lessons learned from Panel 1 were incorporated into the second wall. "We've learned a lot. Everything went well throughout the construction of this wall. As we go along, of course, we get better and better."



One of the two, 12-foot thick isolation walls under construction in Panel 2 in January 2006.

Construction on Panel 2's isolation wall began in December 2005 with staging of the block and mortar. More than 23,000 solid concrete blocks, weighing 35 to 37 pounds each, and 3,000 bags of mortar were used to complete the Panel 2 isolation wall.

Ergonomics was a prime consideration in building the isolation wall 2,150 feet underground. Morrison notes that the blocks used in Panel 2 were nearly half the size and weight of those used in Panel 1, and lighter mortar sacks were specified by WIPP buyers.

Crews also made good use of two air-spring pallet tables placed in the intake and exhaust drifts of Panel 2. The tables were moved next to concrete mixers to lift mortar sacks waist-high, eliminating the need for workers to reach or bend for the 60 lb. sacks.

In mid-April, project managers and construction crews met to review the lessons learned during construction and reiterate best practices. Their suggestions for improved safety and better logistics will be used in planning Panel 3's isolation walls.

Panel 2 is the second of eight panels planned for the WIPP underground. Each panel contains seven disposal rooms the length of a football field, 13 feet high and 33 feet wide. After a panel is filled with waste, isolation walls are built at the panel's intake and exhaust drifts, closing the panel off from the rest of the mine as a protective measure until final closure systems are in place.

Morrison said plans are already underway for Panel 3's isolation walls, scheduled for the fall.

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## WIPP a winner in Federal Electronics Recycling and Reuse Challenge

Despite continuous rain, Lois George enjoyed her visit to Washington, D.C. and the White House. George, who works in the WTS property management section, attended a White House ceremony on April 21 to accept the award as one of the 2006 "Federal Electronics Recycling and Reuse Challenge" winners.



The Challenge is designed to encourage federal facilities and agencies to recycle electronic equipment such as computers, printers and monitors. Winners are selected based on the total pounds of equipment recycled between November 15, 2005 and April 22, 2006. During this five-month period, WTS recycled more than 15,000 pounds of electronic equipment.

"Through the diligent efforts of the WTS property management team, electronic equipment that may have otherwise ended up in a scrap pile or landfill will now be reused in a very positive way on another government project," says Diane Snow, who managed the government property transfer for CBFO. "This award is a credit to WTS and the entire facility for the dedication and importance placed on the recycling program at WIPP."

CBFO entered into a memorandum of understanding with UNICOR Federal Prison Industries, Inc. in December 2005. Shipments are picked up and recycled by UNICOR at no cost to WIPP. UNICOR employs federal prison inmates to rebuild the equipment, while at the same time teaching inmates valuable skills.

WIPP competed in the South Region, Civilian Category of medium facilities with 151 to 1,000 employees.

## New equipment arrives at WIPP ... in pieces

A new piece of equipment was recently added to the WIPP underground inventory list. Built in Canada, the new load-haul-dump (LHD) was shipped to Elko, Nev., where WIPP personnel initially field-tested and inspected it. Following inspection, the LHD was disassembled, loaded onto a flatbed trailer and transported to WIPP in four pieces.

On arrival at WIPP, the trailer was moved into the Remote-Handling Bay where the pieces were offloaded and staged for downloading to the underground. Four hoist trips later, the pieces were ready for reassembly underground.

The LHD again was field-tested and emissions tests were performed before it went into service.

The multi-purpose LHD is used to haul mine salt, level floors in the underground and tow equipment.



At left, a new load-haul-dump (LHD) arrives at WIPP. At right, a member of the remote-handling group secures a guideline to offload the operator's compartment. The piece was lifted by an overhead crane.



Photo: Melody Smith, WTS

The 36,000-pound LHD is ready to work. It has a 14,500-pound capacity and its 4-yard bucket can be removed and replaced with forklift tines.



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

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

