

## WIPP Quick Facts (As of 5-25-11)

**9,598**

Shipments received since opening  
(9,114 CH and 484 RH)

**75,076**

Cubic meters of waste disposed  
(74,829 CH and 247 RH)

**145,613**

Containers disposed in the underground  
(145,129 CH and 484 RH)

## CBFO assists with Department of Energy public meetings



**Carlsbad Mayor Dale Janway signs in at the Greater-Than-Class-C meeting held in Carlsbad, NM in April. Two more meetings were held throughout New Mexico to discuss disposal alternatives of GTCC and "GTCC-like" waste.**

The Department of Energy's Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) and its contractors helped facilitate public hearings in April on a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Disposal of Greater-Than-Class C (GTCC) Low-Level Radioactive Waste (LLRW) and GTCC-Like waste.

CBFO oversees the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), the nation's underground repository for defense TRU waste. WTS manages and operates the facility for the DOE.

"CBFO is committed to public outreach," said CBFO Public Affairs Officer Deb Gill. "We're always happy to assist our colleagues in Washington D.C. with facilitating regional events focused on informing our communities and seeking public input."

CBFO provided logistical support at an April 26 meeting in Carlsbad and an April 27 meeting in Albuquerque. Los Alamos National Laboratory provided similar support at an April 28 public meeting in Santa Fe.

The DOE's draft Environmental Impact Statement analyzes several potential disposal methods for GTCC and "GTCC-like" waste.

Public meetings were held in New Mexico because the Los Alamos National Laboratory, WIPP and the WIPP vicinity are three of the potential locations analyzed by the draft EIS. The DOE does not have a preferred alternative for the disposal of this waste, but will include a preferred alternative in the final EIS based on the draft EIS and public comments received. However, DOE will await direction from Congress before issuing a record of decision to implement the selected alternative or alternatives.

GTCC LLRW consists of a small volume of low-level radioactive waste generated throughout the United States as the result of U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission or Agreement State licensed activities. "GTCC-like" waste consists of DOE owned or generated LLRW and potential non-defense TRU waste similar to GTCC.

To assist with educating the public about some of the facts being considered, CBFO officials delivered short presentations about WIPP at the Carlsbad and Albuquerque meetings.

"WIPP is a success story for the DOE and the nation," CBFO Director of Environment, Safety and Health George Basabilvazo told members of the Carlsbad audience. "We are safely and compliantly implementing our mission. I am proud to be a part of a dedicated workforce focused on safely reducing the risk from defense TRU waste."

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### WIPP Blue Mine Rescue Team Competes in Louisiana



File Photo

The WIPP Blue Team competed in its first mine rescue competition of the year at the Southern Region Mine Rescue competition in New Iberia, La. The Blue team took home three trophies for its efforts, including two first place finishes in the first aid and team technician contests. Buddy Webb took third place in the team trainer competition. A total of 14 teams from around the country competed in the event.

The next event for the WIPP mine rescue teams is the Southeast New Mexico Mine Rescue Competition in May in Ruidoso, NM.

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### Hester takes over as WTS Chief Financial Officer

Pam Hester, a Carlsbad native with more than 25 years of management and professional experience in accounting and finance, has been promoted to Chief Financial Officer for URS Washington TRU Solutions (WTS) LLC.

"Pam is the right person for the job," said WTS President and General Manager Farok Sharif. "She has a proven history of looking for ways to improve on existing procedures and an outstanding record of demonstrated leadership."

Hester graduated from New Mexico State University with a Bachelor of Accountancy and earned her Master's Degree in Business Administration from Eastern New Mexico University in Portales. Prior to her tenure at WIPP, her professional experience included positions in public accounting, private accounting and the public utility industry.

Hester joined WTS in 1991 as an accounting analyst, and she was soon promoted to management due to her display of leadership skills. Most recently, Hester served as manager of project analysis and controls for WTS, where she oversaw all aspects of project scheduling and cost analysis.



Hester

During her time at WIPP, Hester has been credited with numerous innovations to reduce costs and increase efficiencies. She was instrumental in WTS achieving its Earned Value Management System certification and has represented the company at several leadership forums.

Hester also has displayed a commitment to assisting the community. She planned and coordinated professional development for her staff and administered the Math and Science Gift Program, which donates computer equipment to local schools, grades K-12.

"I'm pleased to be given this opportunity," Hester said. "With the funding issues facing WIPP, it will be a challenging time, but with everyone's support, we will make it work."

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## Shoemaker returns to Sandia National Laboratories Carlsbad office

Paul Shoemaker has returned to Carlsbad to serve as senior manager of the Carlsbad Programs Group with Sandia National Laboratories.

Shoemaker succeeds Dave Kessel, who transferred to a position with Sandia in Albuquerque.

"I know the work and I know the people," said Shoemaker, who was also Sandia's senior manager in Carlsbad from 2000 to 2005. "I believe in this mission."



**Shoemaker**

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In 2005, Shoemaker left the Carlsbad office to serve on a special project for the Lockheed Martin Corporation, which manages Sandia. Upon conclusion of that work, he accepted a position with Sandia's Albuquerque facility. In that capacity, he served as Deputy Chief Operating Officer of Sandia's Nuclear Weapons Strategic Management Unit.

Shoemaker, who returned to Carlsbad in March, said the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant has set a national example in terms of problem solving.

"WIPP has shown that national problems that seem intractable can be resolved if you are persistent with the science and serious about meeting the regulatory obligations and requirements," he said.

Shoemaker graduated from the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology with a degree in physics. He earned his master's degree in public affairs from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas in Austin.

Sandia has served the Department of Energy as scientific advisor to WIPP since the project began in 1974.

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### Scenes from the WIPPTREX exercise



**A mock radiation survey is performed by a radiological control technician**

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## On the road with WIPP's External Emergency Management program

First responders near Bossier City, La. underwent a mock training scenario last month designed to test their response skills related to any potential incident involving transuranic (TRU) waste shipments through the area to WIPP.

The scenario was part of a WIPP transportation exercise. Area first responder agencies involved had taken Modular Emergency Response Radiological Transportation Training (MERRTT) provided by WIPP instructors along routes used for shipping TRU waste to the underground repository near Carlsbad, N.M. An accident scenario is usually the final component of the training, which is held once every two years in a WIPP transportation region. First responders include EMTs, firefighters and police officers.



**The WIPPTREX scene**



**Local fire crews assist a victim during the mock WIPPTREX exercise in Louisiana last month.**

“WIPP’s transportation system has been repeatedly called the safest in the industry,” said Bill Mackie, Institutional Affairs Manager for the Department of Energy’s (DOE’s) Carlsbad Field Office. “This training is an important component of that designation. Our goal is to have first responders along our transportation routes prepared for even the most unlikely worst-case scenarios.”

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### **Interested in WIPP?**

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Even though WIPP transportation packages are designed and built to withstand extreme hypothetical accidents, first responders along WIPP routes are trained to first test for radiation before administering care to the injured. WIPP drivers assist the scene’s incident commander by providing all relevant information. DOE officials conduct an evaluation after the training exercise is complete.

“The exercise reinforces the state and local authorities’ confidence in safe responses to a radioactive materials accident,” said Lynn Eaton, manager of the Washington TRU Solutions (WTS) External Emergency Management program. “When the local emergency responders are confident, that carries over into the confidence of the community and elected officials.”

The Louisiana scenario was staged just off of Interstate-20, at a nearby recreation complex. It involved an SUV colliding with a WIPPTREX truck and then rolling over to collide with a van of passengers. A TRUPACT-II shipping container was separated from the trailer in the mock accident. Scenario planners made the exercise more difficult by having the scenario include another major accident along I-20 at the same time.

“There were eight area hospitals involved in this scenario, and they had to prepare for the possibility of more than 100 patients,” Mackie said. “Everyone did an excellent job handling this very difficult scenario.”

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

Please send comments and/or  
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