

WIPP Quick Facts (As of 05-28-08)

6,701

Shipments received since opening

55,246

Cubic meters of waste disposed

101,959

Containers disposed in the underground

WIPP included in museum exhibit



Photo: David Mandel, Hubbard Museum of the American West

[Images and display items from WIPP are part of a new exhibit at the Hubbard Museum of the American West.](#)

Museums are a bridge. Patrons visit and peer back in time to witness the best, and sometimes the worst, of times in our collective history. So it may be a surprise to know that WIPP is included in a new exhibit for the general public at the Hubbard Museum of the American West in Ruidoso Downs, NM. Far from being a relic of the past, WIPP's adaptive use of mining and emphasis on safety has solidified its place in New Mexico's mining history.

From May 16 through December, the museum will feature an exhibit titled, *Boomed, Busted & Bought Out Again: The Impact of Mining in New Mexico*. The exhibit explores the history of mining in New Mexico and the southwest from the earliest periods of activity to the present with an eye toward the human experience. Mining is a multi-faceted activity that takes place both above and below ground amidst sometimes dangerous conditions where rich resources, precious metals and minerals necessary to human life and contemporary society are removed and processed for human use and consumption.

"We are fortunate to be able to display this exhibit," says Jay Smith, Director of the Hubbard Museum of the American West. "We have a number of mining-related artifacts in our collection, but not enough for an exhibit of this magnitude. Therefore, we've borrowed items from other museums, private collectors, businesses and even the federal WIPP facility in Carlsbad. It truly is a cooperative venture."

Smith initiated the cooperative effort by contacting the WIPP Information Center by e-mail in February. CBFO approved the temporary use of WIPP property by the museum and display items were assembled by WTS Communication and Operations staff.

Among the WIPP-related items museum visitors will see in the exhibit are:

- ⌘ A life-sized mannequin with current WIPP attire and personal protective equipment
- ⌘ Small-scale cutaway drums showing potential types of items disposed at WIPP
- ⌘ A large rock salt specimen from WIPP
- ⌘ A newspaper from the opening of WIPP in 1999
- ⌘ Numerous mining photos

The mission of the Hubbard Museum of the American West is to collect, preserve and interpret the political, social, business, cultural, and environmental history of the American West from the period of human habitation to the present day, with special emphasis on the local and regional arts, history and culture.

R.D. and Joan Dale Hubbard founded the Hubbard Museum of the American West in 1992, then presented it to the City of Ruidoso Downs in 2005. It has grown from its original collection of Anne C. Stradling's Museum of the Horse to being a truly first class historic Western museum. In 2000, the museum became the first New Mexico museum accepted into the Smithsonian Affiliate Program.

WTS employee recently published

WTS employee Norbert Rempe recently served as editor for a publication of the Geological Society of America. Volume XIX of the book series "Reviews in Engineering Geology" is titled *Deep Geologic Repositories*.

Rempe explains that the journey toward this volume began with a symposium on deep geologic repositories during the 32nd International Geological Congress in Florence, Italy in August 2004, for which Rempe was the convener.

"I proposed this special symposium to the organizing committee in 2001 and invited the contributors. After the congress, the authors and I began work on this volume that was finally completed in February 2008," says Rempe.

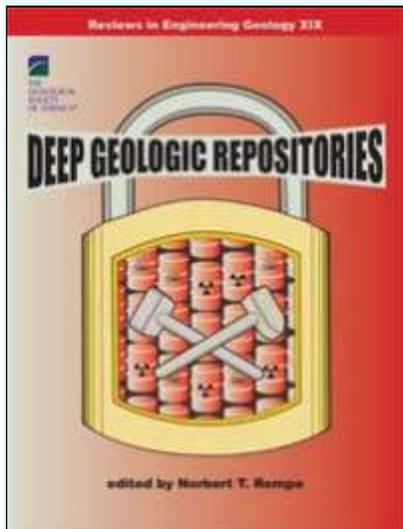
Twenty-six contributing authors from eight countries present 11 case studies of repositories on three continents, with histories ranging from several decades to billions of years. The first chapter discusses the natural nuclear reactors at Oklo and the negligible effects of the waste they produced. The last one is an essay on the capability of average rocks to confine dangerous wastes at depth.

The reviews in the volume constitute a compendium of practical solutions that can be applied to previously vexing problems in environmental and engineering geology. Sixteen independent reviewers from six countries helped improve the original manuscripts.

Rempe states that the review's primary focus is to fill the void of information on repositories that accomplished, and continue to accomplish, their intended purpose: permanent and safe isolation of dangerous materials from the environment.

This volume includes a review about the WIPP site titled *Lessons from early investigations at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant*. In the review, authors Dennis W. Powers and Robert M. Holt discuss lessons learned in the early stages of the WIPP program.

The book is dedicated to four repository pioneers, among them the late New Mexico State Senator Joe Gant, Jr., and former Carlsbad DOE Manager George Dials. Former WTS Graphic Artist Chuck Link designed the cover.



250-million-year-old cellulose discussed at ANS meeting

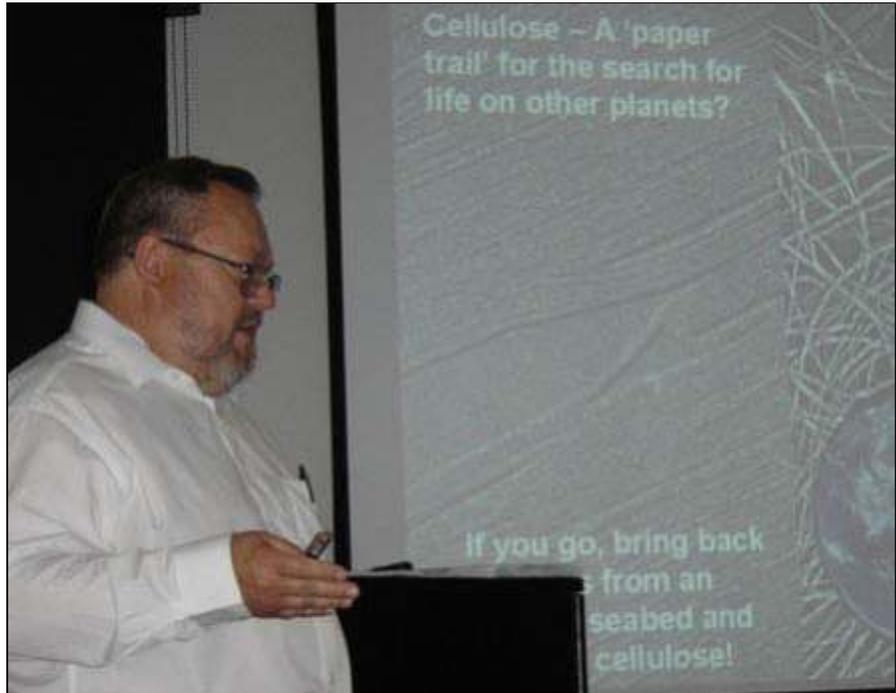


Photo: Victoria Parker (LANL-CO)

CBFO Chief Scientist Roger Nelson speaks at a meeting of the Carlsbad section of the American Nuclear Society.

Roger Nelson, CBFO chief scientist, spoke May 14 to the Carlsbad section of the American Nuclear Society (ANS) about the recent discovery of cellulose in salt deposits underground at WIPP. The discovery of the 250-million-year-old microfibers demonstrates that cellulose may be an ideal target in the search for life on other planets and was featured in the journal *Astrobiology*.

About 30 people attended the talk at the Carlsbad Environmental Monitoring and Research Center (CEMRC).

On June 11, the ANS seminar series will continue with Wes Myers of Los Alamos National Laboratory, who will talk about underground nuclear parks and the potential for such a park in the Carlsbad area. The talk will begin at 6:30 p.m. at CEMRC.

For more information about ANS, contact Dr. Jean-Francois Lucchini at 234-5556.

Submitted by Victoria Parker (LANL-CO)

Students begin summer internships

As the school year comes to a close, college students take off to pursue vacation, summer school or job opportunities. For 17 students hoping to enrich their education, networking and experience, an internship with WTS presented both a job opportunity and a chance to further their knowledge base.



WTS interns arrived May 19 and will stay for the duration of the summer. The interns have come from universities around the region to work in a variety of departments at the WIPP site and Skeen-Whitlock Building.

Students who are eligible for the WTS internship have a minimum 3.3 GPA and have completed at least 60 hours towards their college degree (completion of their sophomore year). The interns come from numerous academic backgrounds, including business administration, engineering, mathematics and English.

Upon arrival, the interns completed General Employee Training, immersing them in WIPP's stringent and exceptional safety policies and procedures. After completing the training, interns were introduced to the full WIPP experience and taken on a tour of the facility and mine.

While this internship will present some difficult tasks, the interns are eager to begin learning and developing with their work. Several of the interns are even returning for their second summer with WTS.

All of the interns have shown a lot of interest and enthusiasm for their jobs this summer as they are all well aware that this opportunity will provide them with valuable experience for future advancement in their respective fields.

Tornado season has arrived

As spring ends and the summer months arrive, New Mexico must prepare for tornado season. During one recent night, three tornadoes were confirmed in Hobbs, NM and the Carlsbad area was under a tornado warning. To effectively prepare for tornadoes it is crucial to be well informed about them. The following information about tornadoes comes from the Federal Emergency Management Administration's Web site.



Photo: Joe Scott

This image of a tornado near Hobbs, NM was captured on a cell phone on May 14.

Interested in WIPP?

If you would like to be notified when TRU TeamWorks is updated with the latest information about WIPP, send an e-mail message to TRUTeamWorks@wipp.ws.

Tornadoes

Peak tornado season arrives in the late spring and lasts through the early summer. A tornado appears as a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud and often strikes quickly and with little or no warning as it may appear nearly transparent until dust and debris are picked up or a cloud forms in the funnel. It is important to remember that it is not uncommon to see clear, sunlit skies behind a tornado.

Tornadoes are most likely to occur in the late afternoon but can occur anytime. Tornado speeds may vary from stationary to 70 mph and while they generally move from southwest to northeast they have been known to move in any direction.

When a tornado is coming, you have only a short amount of time to make critical decisions. Advance planning and immediate response are the keys to surviving a tornado. Here are some tips to stay safe in the event of a tornado.

- ⌘ Have disaster supplies on hand (flashlight, batteries, first aid kit, emergency food and water, essential medicines, sturdy shoes, etc.)
- ⌘ Develop an emergency communication plan
- ⌘ Be aware of changing weather conditions
- ⌘ Look for the following danger indications:
 - ⊕ Whirling dust or debris on the ground under a cloud base
 - ⊕ Hail or heavy rain followed by a dead calm or fast, intense wind shift
 - ⊕ Dark, often greenish sky
 - ⊕ A loud, continuous roar or rumble
- ⌘ If a tornado warning is in effect, seek shelter immediately
- ⌘ If you are inside, go to a pre-determined shelter area (interior room without windows, storm cellar or basement). If these areas are not accessible, go to an inner hallway or the smallest inner room on the lowest level of the building.
- ⌘ If you are outdoors and there is no possible shelter, lie in a ditch or low-lying area or crouch near a strong building. Do not get under an overpass or bridge.
- ⌘ If you are in a vehicle, get out at once and take shelter in a nearby building. If there is no chance of getting indoors follow the same precautions as being outdoors.
- ⌘ Never try to out run a tornado, as they can change speed and direction with no warning. Watch out for falling and flying debris and use your arms to protect your head and neck.

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

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

