



WIPP Quick Facts (As of 6-26-12)

10,609

Shipments received since opening
(10,052 CH and 557 RH)

82,349

Cubic meters of waste disposed
(82,070 CH and 279 RH)

160,272

Containers disposed in the
underground
(159,717 CH and 555 RH)

Three shipments arrive at WIPP from the Savannah River Site in South Carolina.

WIPP and Savannah River Site jointly achieve two milestones

Two U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) facilities shared a milestone event this month. On June 6, three transuranic (TRU) waste shipments in three different shipping packages departed the Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in New Mexico. The shipments in the TRUPACT-II, TRUPACT III and RH 72-B shipping packages completed the cross-country journey and arrived at WIPP the following day (see photo above).

In addition to the use of the three Type B shipping packages, the day also marked the first shipment of SRS remote-handled TRU (RH-TRU) waste to WIPP. Previous RH-TRU waste shipments from SRS to WIPP were wastes that originated at Battelle-Columbus Laboratories in Ohio and were temporarily stored at SRS.

The RH-TRU shipment was made possible through the efforts of URS Washington TRU Solutions' Central Characterization Project with SRS, the DOE Carlsbad Field Office, the New Mexico Environment Department and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to establish RH-TRU waste characterization capabilities for SRS generated waste.

Since 2001, SRS has sent more than 1,370 shipments to WIPP, traveling more than 2 million miles. Of the sites shipping TRU waste to WIPP, SRS ranks third behind Idaho National Laboratory and the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site.

Another 10,000th transportation milestone

Last year, WIPP received its 10,000th shipment of TRU waste. This month,

the site received its 10,000th shipment of contact-handled TRU waste. The milestone shipment originated from the Idaho National Laboratory and arrived at WIPP on June 2.

Environmental Management System earns continued certification

Following an in-depth audit of WIPP processes, programs, procedures, documentation, records and employee knowledge, WIPP's Environmental Management System (EMS) earned continued certification to the International Standards Organization (ISO) 14001 requirements.

EMS certification means that WIPP continues to conduct work in a manner that is protective of the environment.

A full review of the EMS is conducted every three years.



Alternate underground waste transportation route successfully demonstrated

On May 7, a contact-handled TRU waste transporter and, later, the remote-handled TRU waste 41-ton forklift carrying the facility cask (shown above) traveled a new route using the West 30 drift in the WIPP underground to Panel 6, effectively christening the route for use. The event marked over five years of coordinated teamwork to ensure that waste disposal operations can continue should major renovations become necessary in the East 140 drift, the current transport route.

"It's been a long time coming," said Don Galbraith, Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) Site Mining Operations project manager, "but the option to use West 30 as an alternate transport route significantly increases our capability to safely emplace waste in the underground without interruption."

Discussions about providing an alternate transport route began in 2006. Various options were explored including mining a new drift between or around the existing drifts that extend from the Waste Shaft Station area to the disposal panels. The option to widen and increase the height of the West 30 drift and its connecting cross-drifts was selected. The project began almost immediately with mining work and installation of supplemental ground control.

For the project to be successful, changes to the Hazardous Waste Facility Permit and the Documented Safety Analysis were proposed and implemented that allow different traffic patterns and ventilation requirements. Much work went into the design, fabrication and installation of ventilation structures including bulkheads, air locks and overcasts. Mine engineers modeled various options and proved the final engineering design in the field.

URS Washington TRU Solutions' (WTS) Site Operations and Disposal Manager Wes Bryan remarked that the project had been completed in a timely manner despite having to compete for limited resources.

"Panel mining naturally took priority over West 30 mining. The need to install support in other areas to ensure ground control safety was always most important," said Bryan. "We were successful because of the continued support of CBFO management and the many, many WTS individuals who dedicated their time and talents to the project."

Despite the availability of the alternate route, the East 140 drift will continue to be the primary waste transport route.

The WIPP Blood Drive was held June 14-15 and it was a great success. The two-day blood drive resulted in the collection of 111 units of blood. WIPP conducts three blood drives throughout the year. This was the second in 2012 and another is scheduled for October.

At right, Lucky Briggs of the DOE Carlsbad Field Office was one of many who took time to donate blood.

WIPP Blood Drive aims to save lives



Tribes participate in emergency response training



Representatives of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes were in Carlsbad recently to participate in WIPP-sponsored emergency management training.

Shown above are (l to r) CBFO National TRU Program (NTP) Institutional Affairs Manager Bill Mackie; URS Washington TRU Solutions President and General Manager Farok Sharif; Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Public Affairs Manager Randy'L Teton; the Tribes'

DOE to evaluate long-term management and storage of elemental mercury

The Mercury Export Ban Act of 2008 directs DOE to designate a facility or facilities for the long-term management and storage of elemental mercury generated within the United States. DOE currently projects that a storage and management capability for a total inventory of up to 10,000 metric tons (11,000 tons) of elemental mercury may be required for a 40-year period of time.

DOE has prepared a supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) to evaluate the potential environmental, human health and socioeconomic impacts of elemental mercury storage at facilities in the vicinity of WIPP near Carlsbad, New Mexico: 1) Section 20, Township 22 South, Range 31 East; and 2) Section 10, Township 22 South, Range 31 East.

A final decision will be made after the SEIS process is completed. At that time these candidate locations will be considered, in addition to seven locations previously analyzed in the Mercury Storage Environmental Impact Statement.

The Department is hosting meetings to invite public comment on the scope of the SEIS, as noted below.

June 26, 2012

4:30-5:30 p.m. - SEIS open house

5:30-8:00 p.m. - SEIS scoping meeting

Carlsbad Field Office, Skeen-Whitlock Bldg. Auditorium, 4021 National Parks Highway, Carlsbad, N.M.

June 28, 2012

Executive Director Angelo Gonzales;
and CBFO NTP Director J.R. Stroble.

Since 1988, more than 31,000
emergency response professionals
along WIPP routes have been trained.

4:30-6:00 p.m. - SEIS open house

6:00-8:30 p.m. - SEIS scoping meeting

Crowne Plaza, 1901 University Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, N.M.



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

To be added to the TRU TeamWorks update notification list or to submit comments
or suggestions, please contact us at TRUTeamWorks@wipp.ws.

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