

## WIPP Quick Facts (As of 1-17-12)

**10,284**

Shipments received since opening  
(9,748 CH and 536 RH)

**79,890**

Cubic meters of waste disposed  
(79,620 CH and 270 RH)

**156,539**

Containers disposed in the  
underground  
(156,003 CH and 536 RH)



## British Broadcasting Company program features WIPP interview

On December 30, 2011, WIPP got a bit of airtime on "the other side of the pond." CBFO Chief Scientist Roger Nelson was interviewed by British Broadcasting Corporation reporter Julian Keane for "The World Today" program for a series related to various types of waste.

Nelson spoke about the properties of salt that make it an ideal disposal medium and answered questions about WIPP's Passive Institutional Controls to warn future generations of what is buried far below the surface.

## DOE awards two small-business contracts for trucking services to WIPP

The Department of Energy (DOE) awarded two small-business contracts to CAST Specialty Transportation, Inc. and Visionary Solutions, LLC, to provide trucking services to transport transuranic (TRU) waste, from DOE and other defense-related TRU waste generator sites to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), near Carlsbad, New Mexico. The contracts are firmfixed-price with cost-reimbursable expenses over five years.

CAST Specialty Transportation, Inc. of Henderson, Colorado, will begin services immediately. Visionary Solutions, LLC, of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, will begin their contract in July 2012. Both companies are the incumbent contractors, performing trucking services for TRU waste since 2007.

The total maximum value of the CAST Specialty Transportation, Inc. contract is \$119 million, if all options are exercised. The total maximum value of the Visionary Solutions, LLC contract is \$120.5 million, if all options are exercised.

The transportation of TRU waste is performed by DOE contracted trucking carriers that use public highways on custom designed trailers. WIPP receives defense-related TRU waste shipments at the average rate of 20 to 35 shipments per week.

TRU waste must be transported in Nuclear Regulatory Commission approved, Type-B packaging. The truck drivers must meet and maintain stringent safety and hazardous materials hauling qualifications. WIPP is the only facility in the U.S. specifically designed for permanent disposal of defense-generated TRU waste.

## WIPP receives first remote-handled waste shipment from Sandia Labs

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) has received the first of eight planned defense-related remote-handled transuranic (RH-

## Planned maintenance scheduled

WIPP's annual planned maintenance is scheduled for January 20 - February 13. Projects that are difficult to complete during normal site disposal operations are planned. Watch for more information about the work performed in the next issue of TRU TeamWorks!

TRU) waste shipments from Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) in Albuquerque. The shipment arrived December 16 for permanent disposal in WIPP's underground repository.

DOE National TRU Program Director J.R. Stroble said the shipment is significant to WIPP. "Our goal is to reduce the nation's nuclear waste footprint and we routinely receive shipments from around the country," said Stroble. "This first shipment of RH-TRU waste from Sandia begins the final stages of eliminating legacy TRU waste from a DOE site in New Mexico."

SNL and WIPP Central Characterization Project personnel have worked for more than a year to prepare the RH-TRU waste for shipment. Since 2010, three shipments of contact-handled TRU waste were sent from Sandia to Idaho's Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project for characterization and certification prior to final shipment to WIPP. Cleanup of all TRU waste at SNL is on schedule for completion in March 2012.

DOE efforts to clean up New Mexico's TRU waste include 923 shipments from Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in northern New Mexico to WIPP. TRU waste is the byproduct of nuclear defense program research and weapons production. Both SNL and LANL milestones are supported as part of a \$172 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act investment to expedite legacy TRU waste disposal activities across the DOE complex

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## Meet Helen Thomas: Contracting Officer

Early last month, the U.S. Department of Energy's Carlsbad Field Office welcomed Helen Thomas to the staff, who will serve as a contracting officer. Her degree in business includes a concentration in procurement and acquisition management.



Thomas' civil service career has included similar work for both the U.S. Army and the Veteran's Administration (VA). For the Army, she completed a contract specialist internship at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas and later worked as a contracting officer at Red River Army Depot in Texarkana, Texas. At Red River, her work involved the re-building of military vehicles to return to the war in Iraq.

Since October 2008, Thomas has been in Albuquerque, working for the VA. The contracts she awarded and administered there were focused on improving the quality of life for paralyzed veterans and providing community outreach clinics throughout New Mexico. She was involved in the opening of a new clinic in Taos just a few months before coming to Carlsbad.

Thomas has also had previous business experience outside of the U.S. Government. She is licensed in the business and health fields as a real estate broker, massage therapist and cosmologist.

Thomas balances her career with interests outside of work. She enjoys traveling, especially the Puget Sound of Washington, snow skiing, riding motorcycles, dancing, painting, cooking, entertaining and spending time with friends and family. She is also studying Hebrew.

"I'm excited about the DOE mission at the CBFO," said Thomas.

She says she's looking forward to building strong relationships with co-workers and others involved in making WIPP successful.



**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](mailto:TRUTeamWorks@wipp.ws).

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