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**For Immediate Release**

**WIPP Honored with Transportation Safety Award**

**CARLSBAD, N.M., January 29, 2009** – The U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) was honored by the United States Transportation Council (USTC) with an award for transportation safety. James Rispoli, former DOE Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, was in Carlsbad to present the award and to recognize WIPP transportation system personnel for the achievement.

The USTC is the leading voice of the U.S. nuclear materials transport industry, whose membership includes the country’s most prominent transportation companies, customers and associated industries.

The WIPP transportation system was recognized for its record of safety since 1999, when the first waste shipment arrived at WIPP from Los Alamos National Laboratory. To date, the project has received over 7,000 shipments and WIPP drivers have logged more than 8 million loaded miles.

“Public safety is a priority at WIPP,” said Dr. Dave Moody, DOE Carlsbad Field Office manager. “We are honored that the Transport Council has recognized the efforts of our entire transportation team, from the staff who load the waste at generator sites, to the schedulers, drivers and other professionals who safely get it to WIPP.”

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The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant is a U.S. Department of Energy facility designed to safely isolate defense-related TRU waste from people and the environment. Waste temporarily stored at sites around the country is shipped to WIPP and permanently disposed in rooms mined out of an ancient salt formation 2,150 feet below the surface. WIPP is located 26 miles south east of Carlsbad, N.M.

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