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By the Numbers

Transportation and disposal statistics are available on pages 3 and 4.

WIPP hosts DOE Deputy Secretary Kyle McSlarrow

On Tuesday, October 12, WIPP employees who gathered to welcome DOE Deputy Secretary Kyle McSlarrow on his first visit to the facility were treated to an encouraging announcement regarding the management and operating contractor. McSlarrow took the opportunity to reveal DOE's intent to open a 45-day window to discuss exercising a 5-year option under the current WTS contract at WIPP, which was competitively awarded in January 2000.

McSlarrow noted recent project accomplishments, including the receipt of the 3,000th shipment of waste and this month's Mine Rescue team championship as examples of WTS' performance in the areas of operations and waste disposal. He also spoke highly of the WIPP safety culture and encouraged employees to remain vigilant in this regard.

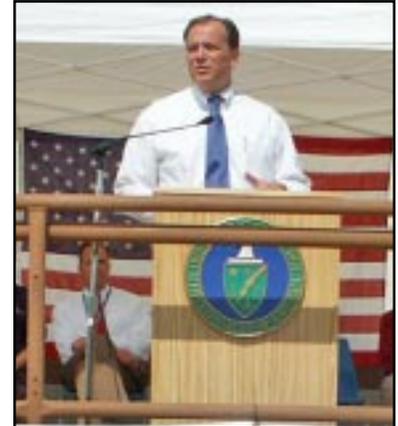
"WIPP is a jewel in the DOE crown, and I am honored to stand with you today. The proposed contract options for WTS are a tribute to the WIPP workers. As I toured the facility, employee pride in the project was evident. The WIPP workforce is indeed a national treasure, and the contract options are well-deserved."

Washington Group International President and CEO Steve Hanks was on hand at WIPP for the announcement. "This is one of the most exciting days in the history of Washington Group. WIPP is the foundation for the work performed by WTS, and we are thrilled at the opportunity to continue the management of this project for five more years. DOE is a valuable client to the corporation, and the WIPP mission is critical to the nation. The Carlsbad community's support for Washington Group has been invaluable and is greatly appreciated."

Bob Carter, district director for Congressman Steve Pearce, also toured with the McSlarrow group. "Congressman Pearce is very pleased that Deputy Secretary McSlarrow was able to visit WIPP to make this announcement today. His presence speaks well for DOE's commitment to the site."

Carter also noted, "Congressman Pearce's efforts in Washington on WIPP's behalf have been supported by vocal advocacy from Representative Heaton and Mayor Forrest, and he is glad to work with them in this regard."

McSlarrow, Hanks and Carter were joined on the WIPP tour by DOE General Counsel Lee Otis, DOE-EM Acting Assistant Secretary Paul Golan, DOE-EM Deputy Chief Operating Officer Inés Triay, Washington Group Senior Executive Vice President Stephen Johnson, Carlsbad Mayor Bob Forrest and Carlsbad Department of Development President George Dunagan.



Kyle McSlarrow, U. S. Department of Energy deputy secretary, addresses Waste Isolation Pilot Plant employees Tuesday.



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CEMRC heads into the future

Jim Conca hit the ground running when he took over as director of CEMRC on September 7. Within two weeks of assuming his duties, Conca traveled to Washington, D.C. with city leaders to help secure funding to continue key programs run by the Center for WIPP. The trip was worth the effort. The team was successful in obtaining \$1.2 million in operating funds from DOE for the Center's use through FY05. The first \$600,000 block will be released to CEMRC by DOE this month.



CEMRC Director, Jim Conca

But Conca is not resting just yet. He brings a unique perspective to his new position along with some strong ideas for beefing up the Center's image and operational direction.

"LANL-CO and WTS have several employees who permanently reside at the Center due to the nature of their work, and until I accepted this position, I was one of those LANL-CO employees. So I have some insight into the potential that this facility and its staff possess for collaborations that can benefit WIPP, DOE and Carlsbad. I am excited at the prospect of expanding the CEMRC mission into some very interesting areas of research and operation, particularly given several new national initiatives in areas of energy and water."

With the \$1.2 million from DOE, CEMRC will continue its WIPP monitoring program. "We will take on the Environmental Evaluation Group's monitoring responsibilities along with our original WIPP program. It is important to DOE, WIPP stakeholders and the public that independent monitoring of WIPP's impacts on the environment continue. We are the ideal choice to continue that role through FY05 and beyond."

Conca and members of his staff are also looking to take CEMRC into the arenas of homeland security research and training. "CEMRC has wide expertise in dirty bomb technology," he notes. "We are the ideal facility for research into managing dirty bomb occurrences, training emergency responders to deal with a radiological situation and for determining the biological impacts of a dirty bomb on the responders and victims."

Jim notes that the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Artesia and the Energetic Materials Research and Testing Center in Socorro are also potential clients for the Center. "Radiological response training would be invaluable to the FLETC cadets. Many law enforcement agencies already possess radiation detection instruments. We can train their people on how to operate those instruments effectively. Emergency responders and law enforcement personnel need to know that one responds differently whether it is a uranium dirty bomb or a cesium dirty bomb. With the first, you can rescue people with ordinary protective gear that responders have on a hazardous materials team. With the latter, you cannot. You just have to run away and wait for shielding."

Jim's 5-year vision for the Center is one to admire. "I'd like to see our facility grow 50 percent larger in size and research capacity. We have much to offer the WIPP family, and I want to continue to grow that partnership as well."

"Publicly, I want the Center to become more involved in Carlsbad and at the New Mexico State University main campus. And finally, I would like to see our operations progress into emergency response training and research."

Conca's vision may seem aggressive for a facility that has historically kept a low profile. But he is confident that the Center is ready to move forward. "The combination of our facility and staff expertise creates an unfulfilled potential for growth at CEMRC. I am excited about our future and the contributions we have yet to make at WIPP, in Carlsbad and to the nation as a whole."

Transportation Trivia

WIPP received its **3,000th** shipment of TRU waste on September 23. Thanks to the dedicated drivers of Tri-State Motor Transit and CAST Transportation, WIPP trucks have safely traveled more than **3,000,000** miles.

What other facts do we know about WIPP transportation? Test your transportation knowledge with the following multiple choice questions.

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By the Numbers

Shipments scheduled to arrive at WIPP week of 10/17/04 - 10/23/04: **24**

INEEL - **4**
 LLNL - **2**
 RFETS - **15**
 SRS - **3**

(subject to change)

3,047 total shipments received at WIPP as of 10/13/04

1. TRANSCOM's base satellite receiver station is located in:

- a. Denver
- b. Albuquerque
- c. San Diego
- d. WIPP Central Monitoring Room



2. Department of Transportation weight limit for loaded TRUPACT trucks is:

- a. 62,000 lbs.
- b. 80,000 lbs.
- c. 100,000 lbs.
- d. 86,000 lbs.

3. Including required driver walk-around inspections, what is the average number of inspections WIPP trucks undergo on a roundtrip to INEEL?

- a. 23
- b. 33
- c. 16
- d. 7



4. Who determines WIPP routes?

- a. Department of Transportation
- b. Interstate Highway Commission
- c. DOE and states involved
- d. Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

5. To date, DOE has trained ____ emergency response personnel along WIPP routes.

- a. 24,012
- b. 5,734
- c. 31,894
- d. 5,950

6. The current number of states WIPP trucks cross transporting TRU waste to WIPP:

- a. 19
- b. 28
- c. 35
- d. 18



Answers: 1. C 2. B 3. B 4. C 5. A 6. A

Made in the shade

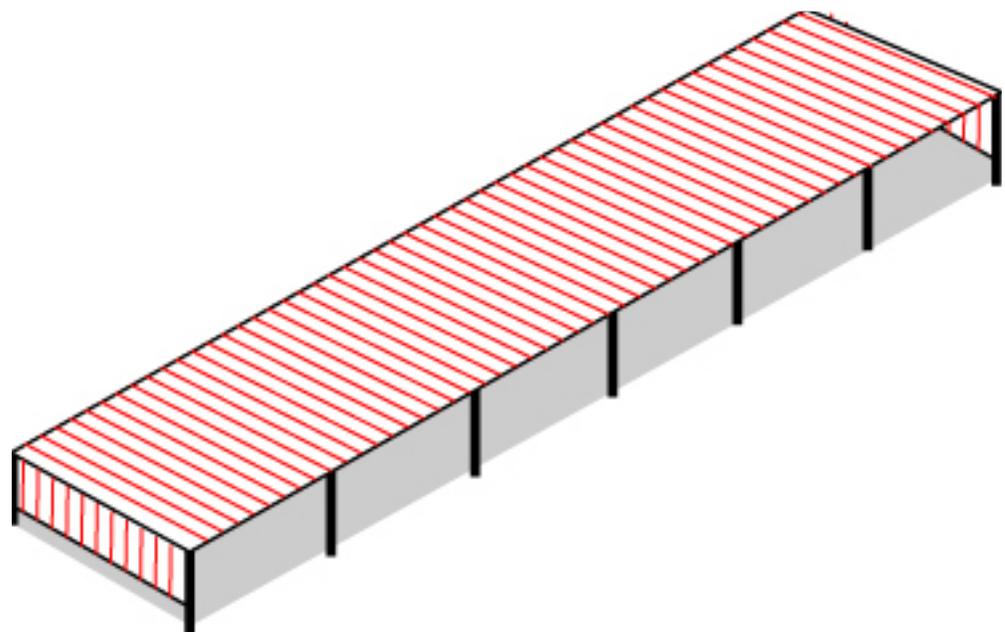
WIPP’s Parking Lot Unit, located behind the Waste Handling Building, may soon look like a giant carport. According to WTS senior engineer, Suzanne Byrd, a 170-foot by 40-foot cover for the parking unit is but part of WIPP’s proposed air recirculation project. The purpose of the project, funded through DOE’s Federal Energy Management Program, is two-fold: energy conservation and an improved work environment.

Arriving TRUPACT shipping containers may be stored up to 60 days in the parking lot unit until transfer to the Waste Handling Building for payload removal. Ventilation engineers say the containers – which reach surface temperatures as high as 150° F from exposure to the summer sun – drag down the building’s “once-through” air cooling system when brought inside. At present, intake air to the building is cooled once and then exhausted, resulting in elevated workplace temperatures.

Byrd says plans are underway to redesign duct work in the Waste Handling Building mezzanine and Exhaust Filter Building to change the air flow pattern and re-circulate cooled air back through the fans. Shading the TRUPACTs will also keep energy costs and temperatures down.

James Hedin, WTS senior engineer, who worked to fund the project, notes that once-through ventilation systems are common at DOE facilities. WIPP’s air recirculation project will be a model project. Architectural engineers, evaluating the project for energy savings as a prerequisite for federal funding, estimate the project will have a 4-year payback in saved energy costs. Hedin says workers will see a big payback in improved operating conditions.

The WRES Permitting and Compliance group submitted a Class 1 permit modification request to the New Mexico Environment Department for the 18-foot high “TRUPACT-port” on September 30. On-site construction activities will begin soon and are expected to take 6 to 8 weeks to complete.



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By the Numbers

Waste disposed in the WIPP underground as of 10/13/04:

- 56,132** waste drums
- 3,735** standard waste boxes
- 1,217** ten-drum overpacks
- 24,286** cubic meters

Ten years of stardom

Fame may be fleeting, but safety at WIPP is in it for the long haul. October 6 marked the 10-year anniversary of WTS' star status in DOE's Voluntary Protection Program (VPP). The program promotes safety and health excellence through cooperative efforts among labor, management and government at DOE contractor sites.

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A decade ago, then Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary came to Carlsbad to award WIPP star status, the first DOE site to receive the designation in the program's history. Since then other DOE sites have followed, but WIPP is now the first to reach the 10-year milestone.

"WIPP's safety culture is consistently high," says Curtis Wynne, WTS VPP coordinator. "Our employees make the difference, and they have total management support and commitment to safety."

That safety culture has led to numerous safety-related awards for WTS, including DOE-VPP "Star of Stars" awards in each of the last three years, and three "Star Among Stars" awards at the "Super Star" level from the private industry's VPP Participants Association.

The National Safety Council also recognized WTS employees this summer with an award for working 2 million hours without a day-away-from-work accident or injury. In addition, the New Mexico Mining Association recently named WTS the Mine Operator of the Year for the 18th consecutive year for outstanding safety performance.



Employees first celebrated WIPP's star status in the Voluntary Protection Program in October 1994.

A decade of change

Remember what life was like when WIPP earned its first VPP star designation? Here's a quick look back.

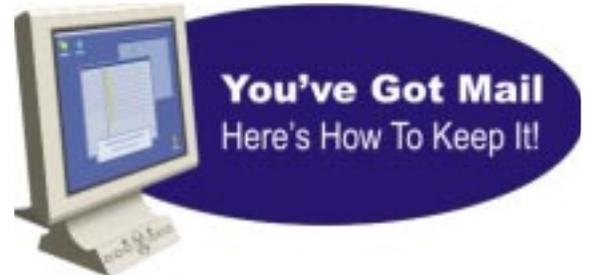
- *U.S. President – Bill Clinton*
- *NM Governor – Bruce King*
- *U.S. Secretary of Energy – Hazel O'Leary*
- *DOE Manager – George Dials*
- *EPA certification – pending*
- *Hazardous Waste Facility Management Permit - pending*
- *Number of shipments received at WIPP – 0*
- *Years until WIPP would first receive waste - 5*
- *Forrest Gump won the Academy Award for Best Picture*

As WTS celebrates its 10-year anniversary, the 2004 fiscal year total recordable injury rate reached an all-time low of 0.90 cases per 200,000 hours worked. By comparison, the mining industry records a national rate of 4.0 and the standard industry classification average is 7.3.

"That accomplishment was a direct result of senior management setting a stretch goal and then being directly involved in the safety of our employees every day," Wynne says.

Safeguard information stored in personal folders

If you use personal folders to store your e-mail, you could be in danger of losing your information. There is a file size limit on the personal folder of 2 gigabytes (gb) per folder. When your personal folder gets very close to the 2 gb size, it will become corrupted. There are a couple of utilities that Technical Support can run to fix it, but you will lose some data and your folder titles will be lost. What can you do to protect yourself?



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- Check the size of your personal folders. Go to Start, Search, Files and Folders. Search for the filename *.pst. If more than one shows up, look at the date of the file to determine which one(s) you are using. How big is it? If it is around 1,700,000 kb, then you need to take further action.
- Backup or copy the personal folder. This should be done regardless of the file size. If it is important enough to keep, it is important enough to backup. You can make a copy of it on your hard drive, or you can copy it to CD (if it is under 700,000 kb). The key here is to establish a routine for backing up and protecting your data. Technical Support also has new software for use with Windows 2000 or later that will backup personal folders for you. Contact them and ask about the “pst backup utility.”
- If your pst file is getting close to the 1,700,000 kb limit, start moving or deleting e-mail from that folder. You can have multiple personal folders, or you can actually save individual messages to your hard disk. By placing the messages on your hard disk, you don't have to worry about the file size, and they are still searchable with Windows Search. You can categorize them into folders just as you would your e-mail personal folders.

Managing your personal folders takes time and care. But a little preventive medicine now can avert a big disaster down the road. If you have any questions or would like help implementing some of these recommendations, please contact Technical Support at Extension 7422.

-- Contributing writer, Leslie Rostro, NCI

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HP Journal Features WIPP

The October 2004 issue of *Health Physics – The Radiation Safety Journal* – features an Operational topic titled “A New Technique for Preliminary Estimates of TRU Activity on Air Sample Filters and Radiological Smears,” written by WTS employee **Robert B. Hayes, PhD**. The magazine’s cover features a photograph of a WIPP radiological engineer, **Linda Frank-Supka** observing an environmental low volume air sampler with the WIPP site in the background.



TeamWorks thanks you

The *TRU TeamWorks* staff would like to thank all readers who participated in our recent survey. The results are being compiled and will be summarized in our October 28 issue.

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Birthdays

Robert Johnson (WTS) - October 17
Kevin Hughes (WTS) - October 17
Jim Morrison (NCI) - October 18
Joe Field (CTAC) - October 20
Garry Bannister (WTS) - October 20

Doug Evans (LANL) - October 21
Anne Hallman (LANL) - October 22
Kirk Nance (WTS) - October 22
Porf Martinez (CTAC) - October 23
Kim Greer (WTS) - October 27



Appointments

Kathy Kessler has accepted a position with WTS Human Resources effective November 1. Her duties include employee liaison for WTS employees, assisting employees with Human Resources opportunities and general employee relations.

Kessler has 16 years of experience in various departments at WIPP, most recently as a project specialist in Project Analysis and Control. She holds a B.S. in Business Administration with concentration in Management Science. She also received her project management professional certification in 2000.

Tim Boswell has been reassigned to the WTS Human Resources organization effective October 18. He will serve as an employee liaison for WTS employees and assist employees in Human Resources opportunities and general employee relations.

Boswell has 14 years of experience in various departments at WIPP. He was a trainer in WTS Technical Training. Boswell also has a B.S. in Business Administration with a concentration in Management.