

## WIPP Quick Facts

(As of 03-08-06)

**4,416**

Shipments received since opening

**36,178**

Cubic meters of waste disposed

**76,052**

Containers disposed in the underground

## Governor signs mine safety bill into law

Governor Bill Richardson was in Carlsbad on March 7 to sign several pieces of legislation into law. One of them was House Bill 687, which includes additional mine safety requirements. The new law mirrors safety features of a recent law passed in West Virginia following the tragic death of coal miners in that state.

New Mexico mines will now have 90 days to have an implementation plan approved by the New Mexico Mine Inspector.

## Annual maintenance at WIPP

Annual maintenance at WIPP will be performed March 11-18. During that time, no shipments will be received.

## NMED announces hearing dates

Beginning on March 29, all eyes at 13 DOE sites across the country will be on Carlsbad. The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) announced that the public hearing for the draft WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit will begin on this day. The hearing will convene at 9:00 a.m. at the Lake Carlsbad Municipal Golf Course, 901 Muscatel Avenue, and continue daily through April 5, at which time the hearing will recess. It will then reconvene on April 6 in Santa Fe, N.M., at the Harold Runnels Building Auditorium, 1190 S. St. Francis Drive, and continue until 5:00 p.m. on April 7. If needed to accommodate final testimony, the hearing will resume in Carlsbad April 10.



**Above:** Equipment in the WIPP underground that would be used for the disposal of remote-handled TRU (RH-TRU) waste if the draft permit is approved.



**Left:** Much of the RH-TRU waste would be shipped to WIPP in the RH-72B shipping container.

The hearing will consist of two types of testimony—technical and non-technical. The majority of hearing time will be dedicated to technical testimony and can be in written or oral form. This type of testimony is defined as scientific, engineering, economic or various other types of specialized testimony. Anyone wishing to provide technical testimony must submit a Notice of Intent to Present Technical Testimony on or before March 15 to the hearing clerk at the address listed below.

Time has also been allotted for non-technical oral comments. They will be heard daily in Carlsbad at 11:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. and at 7:00 p.m. on March 29, 30 and April 3. In Santa Fe, non-technical comments will be heard during all sessions of the hearing. Written comments may also be filed in lieu of oral comments on or before the March 29 hearing date with the hearing clerk at NMED, Room N-2150, 1190 S. St. Francis Drive, PO Box 26110, Santa Fe, NM 87502.

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## Volunteer for Riverblitz 2006

The annual Riverblitz will be held on Saturday, March 11. Pre-registered groups can get right to work the morning of March 11 and then meet at the Riverwalk Recreation Center at noon for hamburgers and hot dogs.

If you are unable to pre-register, meet at the recreation center at 8:00 a.m. to get your assignment.

To pre-register for a particular area please call 885-2408. If you are interested in working the Black River area, a beautiful location that is in great need of a cleanup, please call or e-mail Russ Leach, a WTS employee at the SWB, at 234-7032 or [russ.leach@wipp.ws](mailto:russ.leach@wipp.ws). Leach will be leading the efforts at Black River and will be meeting volunteers at 7:45 a.m. on March 11 at the SWB parking lot.

Be sure to bring water and snacks. A rake, hoe or shovel to pull trash out of bushes is recommended. Some gloves will be available.

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The draft permit was issued by NMED on November 23, 2005, and was available for public review and comment until February 22, 2006. It was during this comment period that requests for a public hearing were made. Following the conclusion of the public hearing, the hearing officer will recommend his findings to NMED Secretary Ron Curry. NMED may approve the draft permit, deny the draft permit or approve it with changes.

More information about the hearing and NMED contacts is available on the NMED WIPP Web Page ([www.nmenv.state.nm.us/wipp/pdfpermit.html](http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/wipp/pdfpermit.html)).

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## Japan Atomic Energy Commissioner visits WIPP



Pictured l to r: Ned Elkins, Noakazu Sumitani, Hajimu Maeda, Dave Moody.

How do you communicate with the public? How will you mark WIPP after closure so that deep-buried radioactive wastes remain undisturbed? These and other questions were posed by Commissioner Hajimu Maeda of Japan's Atomic Energy Commission to WIPP management on a stopover to Carlsbad last week. Maeda, accompanied by Noakazu Sumitani, a researcher for the Atomic Energy Commission, made a side-trip to WIPP after attending the international Waste Management '06 Symposium in Tucson, AZ.

Carlsbad Field Office Manager Dave Moody and Los Alamos National Laboratory-Carlsbad Operations Manager Ned Elkins took the guests on a tour of the WIPP facility, followed by a noon meeting with WIPP managers to discuss a number of questions Maeda's staff e-mailed prior to his visit.

When the discussion turned to site safety, Commissioner Maeda underscored the importance of individual responsibility. "Safety begins when the individual takes responsibility for his own protection." WTS Safety and Health Manager, Craig Herndon, was quick to add, "And when individual responsibility extends to the safety of coworkers, the safety factor grows exponentially."

On his return to Tokyo, Sumitani thanked his WIPP hosts by e-mail. "I think the openness of information at WIPP was very good. We were able to get significant information about WIPP for disposal of future TRU waste in Japan."

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## Members of the Mine Safety Technology and Training Commission

**Dr. R. Larry Grayson**  
Chairman

**Mark Beauchamp**  
Twentymile Coal Company

**Anthony Bumbico**  
Arch Coal, Inc.

**Dr. Amy Donahue**  
University of Connecticut

**J. Brett Harvey**  
CONSOL Energy, Inc.

**Dr. Jeffrey Hohler**  
National Institute for  
Occupational Safety and Health

**Dr. Thomas Novak**  
Virginia Tech

**Cecil Roberts, Jr.**  
United Mine Workers of  
America

**H.F. "Buddy" Webb**  
Washington TRU Solutions

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## Mr. Webb goes to Washington

Buddy Webb is headed to Washington. He won't be casting any votes in the halls of Congress, but will lend his expertise in mine safety and mine rescue to a national effort to improve safety at the nation's coal mines. Webb has been appointed to the Mine Safety Technology and Training Commission, an organization formed in the wake of the Sago mine tragedy in West Virginia.



WTS' mine rescue trainer Buddy Webb has been tapped to serve on the National Mine Association's Mine Safety Technology and Training Commission. Webb has coordinated WIPP's mine rescue efforts for 15 years and has helped make WIPP's mine rescue teams among the most recognized in the country.

Commission chair, Dr. R. Larry Grayson, announced the appointment of Webb and others. "I'm delighted that so far eight distinguished safety experts have agreed to work with me in identifying new opportunities for improving underground coal mine safety," said Grayson. "They will ensure that our investigation will be thorough and impartial, and that our recommendations will be practical and effective."

"There are some powerhouses on that list," Webb says of his fellow appointees. "I am honored to be included with them." And although WIPP is not a coal mine, he believes that WIPP can still serve as a model for safety. "I would like to use WIPP as a model for how mines can do business safely, and maybe even introduce the benefits of a program like the Voluntary Protection Program."

Not only will Webb take his WIPP experience to the commission, but he also hopes to bring some valuable information back with him. "We're going to be looking at a lot of technology. I think it will be a benefit to us at WIPP, as well."

Webb will first meet with the elite group in Washington on Friday. Several meetings are expected over the next few months. In July, the group will issue recommendations for new or existing technologies and training procedures to enhance the safety in underground coal mines. Those recommendations will undergo a peer review process and Grayson hopes to have final recommendations available in October.

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## Happy Birthday Wishes!

**Dan Standiford (WTS)**  
March 11

**Stewart Jones (WRES)**  
March 12

**Carolyn Carrillo (WTS)**  
March 15

**Mike Quintela (WTS)**  
March 16

**Larry Madl (WRES)**  
March 18

**Brad Day (WTS)**  
March 22

### Is your birthday on our list?

Employee birthdays are submitted once and must be re-approved for publication by you every year. Please submit birth dates to the TRU TeamWorks staff at:

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

## A fond farewell



CBFO Manager Dave Moody presents Dr. Chuan-Fu Wu with a signed collage of images from WIPP. Wu previously served as CBFO's authorization basis senior technical advisor. Wu's new assignment as the Chief Safety Officer for the Office of Environmental Management and DOE Integrated Safety Management champion will lead him to DOE Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

## WIPP employees win races in city election



Elkins

WIPP employees by day and city councilmen by night. Two members of the WIPP team are celebrating wins in city council races. Ned Elkins, manager of Los Alamos National Laboratory – Carlsbad Operations, won re-election to the Carlsbad City Council in Ward 3. He was uncontested for the seat.



Day

Brad Day, a WTS engineer, won his first bid for a seat on the city council in Ward 4. Day faced two other candidates, but won with 66 percent of the votes cast in that race.

Their term of office is for four years.

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## Suspect/Counterfeit Items Training

Thursday, March 16  
8:00 a.m. or 12:00 p.m.  
Training Building

To sign up, please contact your training coordinator or Mary Ann Murillo at 8646. For the class to count toward S/CI initial or refresher training, an open reference exam will be given after the class to those who wish to take it.

For more information on S/CI please check the WIPP Intranet site at: [http://bellview/wqnra/sci\\_program.htm](http://bellview/wqnra/sci_program.htm).

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## Experts to offer training

Is it real or is it fake? That's the question asked when dealing with suspect/counterfeit items (S/CI) and a pair of experts from DOE Headquarters is coming to WIPP to help with the answer.

Roger Moerman, who has been involved in the Fraud and Counterfeit Detection Program since 1993, will teach a class on the recognition of S/CI parts. He has worked with the Department of Energy, the Federal Aviation Administration (ANI-10), various state and local agencies and private firms providing consulting and education services on fraud and suspect/counterfeit detection. Tom Williams will present the DOE position on this issue as part of the class.

The counterfeit business is huge, and by Business Week's estimate, it amounts to about seven percent of the world's trade, or about \$500 Billion in 2004. But what does it have to do with WIPP? In a word ... safety.

We want to know that the materials and equipment we are using meet design requirements. Safety is the driving factor behind the DOE requirement that all its contractors have programs to detect existing S/CI and, most importantly, to prevent the introduction of new S/CI at DOE sites.

At WIPP, WTS has a program for discovering existing suspect parts, identifying them and preventing S/CIs from coming on site. Discovery of an S/CI leads to the part being marked with blue paint, quality assurance inspection reports, hold tags, a nonconformance report to disposition the part, work orders and an occurrence report. In the end, the DOE Inspector General (IG) is notified. The IG determines if there is adequate evidence to investigate fraud, waste and abuse. Most of the parts discovered have been bolts that were installed when the site was constructed.



S/CI bolts can even be found in original parts.

The problem is not limited to the workplace, and can cause problems at home, as well. Too often, we are so caught up in our "good deal" that we give little thought to why a product is so inexpensive. But, if those counterfeit parts are the brake pads on your automobile, you and your family may be at risk. Even at home, the issue goes beyond money. The issue is safety.

**Contributing writer: Jim Johnson, WTS Quality Assurance**

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

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

