



## WIPP Quick Facts

(As of 06-07-06)

**4,679**

Shipments received since opening

**38,581**

Cubic meters of waste disposed

**79,198**

Containers disposed in the underground

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## June is National Safety Month

WTS parent company Washington Group International is joining the National Safety Council (NSC) in recognizing June as National Safety Month. Washington Group joins thousands of businesses, national safety and health leaders, community groups and organizations in recognizing the national observance and bringing safety to a special focal point during the summer months and throughout the year.

“The well being of our employees is the first thing we think about in all of our operations,” said Brad Giles, vice president – environmental, safety, and health. “National Safety Month is an opportunity to, not only remind employees about workplace safety, but also to carry those safe practices home. As safety professionals, we care about ourselves and our employees’ safety at home and on the job.”

## Technical testimony concludes at public hearing

The road toward receipt of remote-handled waste at WIPP got noticeably shorter Saturday with the conclusion of the technical testimony portion of a hazardous waste facility permit public hearing.

Testimony began May 31 at the Stevens Inn, along with at least two daily public comment sessions, which ran through Tuesday.

More than 150 area residents, including from Loving, Artesia and Hobbs, spoke. All had positive comments about WIPP, with many mentioning the site’s safety record, economic impact, support for community activities and national importance. Public comment will also be taken Wednesday through Friday in Santa Fe.

In addition to the receipt of remote-handled waste, the anticipated permit modifications include those commonly known as Section 310/311 for federal legislation mandating their request. Modifications include waste characterization process changes, a new waste confirmation process, changing the method for demonstrating compliance with volatile organic compound standards and increased container storage capacity.

DOE counsel put on five witnesses during the technical testimony portion of the hearing – Wayne Ledford (CTAC), John Garcia (WTS), Bob Kehrman (WRES), Phil Gregory (WTS) and Sean White (WRES) – who laid out support for the modifications.

With a number of agreements hammered out in earlier negotiations, the only outstanding issue was remote-handled waste, with opposition from Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety, which did not present technical testimony, and Citizens for Alternatives to Radioactive Dumping.

Three witnesses testified for the New Mexico Environment Department – James Bearzi, Steve Zappe and Kathryn Lynnes.

**Submitted by Victoria Parker (LANL)**

“I represent the people most impacted by WIPP. In our district, I venture to say that it has more than 95 percent approval rating among my constituents.”

**New Mexico State Representative John Heaton**

## WIPP Safety Fair approaching



WIPP's medical services team (Mary Williams, Anita Self and Joyce Pruitt) fought the war on heat at last year's WIPP Safety Fair. They handed out water, sunscreen and information on preventing heat stroke.

WIPP's 2006 Safety Fair is scheduled for June 27 (in town) and June 28 (site). The fair is for all WIPP project participants.

## Electric Cart Safety Reminder

*"All carts are to give mobile equipment the right of way. Pull the cart to the rib furthest from the mobile equipment and stop. Proceed only on a signal from the mobile equipment operator, or after the mobile equipment has passed."*

That comes from CAR-101 WIPP Electric Cart User's Handbook, where "mobile equipment" includes haulage trucks, whether underground or on the surface. That rule is telling us not to risk pitting a golf cart against a huge multi-ton truck.

Drivers of large vehicles do not have the visibility of their surroundings that others have. That's why it's so important for pedestrians and small vehicle drivers to stay clear.

Meanwhile, operators of large equipment must keep close watch and stay aware of their surroundings. Remember, it takes constant vigilance and the cooperation of all personnel to maintain a safe work place.

## NRC chairman visits WIPP



The group was briefed at the Skeen-Whitlock Building and took a look at the demonstration model of the NRC-certified TRUPACT-II. Pictured left to right: CBFO Manager Dave Moody, Region IV Administrator Bruce Mallett, NRC Chairman Nils Diaz, Mohammed Shuaibi, Roger Davis.

WIPP welcomed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's highest ranking official last week. On Friday, NRC Chairman Nils Diaz, Region IV Administrator Bruce Mallett, and two other NRC officials visited WIPP to get a first-hand look at project operations.

CBFO Manager Dave Moody gave the NRC entourage a WIPP overview at the Skeen-Whitlock Building, then the group traveled to the WIPP site for a tour of the surface and underground facilities. "Chairman Diaz was very impressed with the quality and safety of the WIPP operation," said Moody.



Underground photo submitted by Richard West (WTS)

Chairman Diaz (left) and other NRC officials toured the WIPP underground.

Diaz was appointed NRC chairman by President Bush in 2003. He has served on the NRC commission since 1996. Prior to his work for the NRC, Diaz was involved with policy formulation and guidance for protection of public health and safety and was a professor of Nuclear Engineering Sciences at the University of Florida, where he earned masters and doctorate degrees.

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## WIPP teams raise money for Relay for Life

Four teams from WIPP participated the Relay for Life and raised nearly \$4,000. The four teams were from Retrieval, Characterization and Transportation (RCT), Business Management, CTAC and Team Joey (site).



Two of the WIPP teams are pictured above. More than 110 WIPP employees participated.

WIPP had over 110 team members. There were over 1,000 participants total, meaning we had about 10% of the participation. Also, Dave Haar challenged RCT to 100% participation. They put together a paper chain that was over 80 yards long.

WTS and Navarro Research and Engineering were both corporate sponsors and Lisa Roback (Triumph) was the chairperson for the Relay. Relay for Life is a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. The event in Carlsbad, NM raised more than \$52,000.



WTS interns ready for the short trip to the WIPP underground. Back row (l to r): Jason Dugger, John Calliccoat, Mike Nelson, Marcos Lechuga, David Cooper and Brandon Lackey. Front row (l to r): Matt Mathis, Kimone George, Heather Anderson and Jordan Henricks.

The NRC regulates the packages used to ship TRU waste to WIPP. Four WIPP shipping packages are NRC-certified: the TRUPACT-II and HalfPACT, designed to ship contact-handled TRU waste, and the RH-72B and CNS-160B used for shipping remote-handled TRU wastes. The Type B packages underwent a series of rigorous tests for certification.

The NRC was created in 1974 to oversee the nation's nuclear regulatory activity. The agency has four regional offices.

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## New TLDs for monitoring exposure to ionizing radiation

A new version of the thermoluminescent dosimeter, or TLD, has been adopted by WIPP to measure occupational exposure to radiation. The new Harshaw model 8825 TLD replaces the 8805 model that has been in use at WIPP since 1989.

TLDs, worn on the outer layer of clothing, are assigned to personnel who work more than 200 hours in controlled radiological areas.

The 8825 model's TLD chip is covered by a recessed Mylar window, making it less susceptible to damage than the older version 8805. Another difference between the old and new TLDs is the location of the label. The name and number label is located on the back of the new TLD.

The Department of Energy Laboratory Accreditation Program accredited the new TLD for use at WIPP. Requirements for accreditation include three rounds of dosimeter response testing to various levels and types of radiation, as well as on-site evaluation every two years. The new TLDs were put into service April 1.

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## Students to spend summer working at WIPP

Summer break for college students can involve three different things: summer school, summer vacation away from school or job opportunities. For the students that came to WIPP, a job opportunity to help their career was the best way to go.

WTS has opened the internship program to students once again this summer, after a two-year hiatus.



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## 2006 WTS Interns

**Heather Anderson, NMSU**  
Finance and Accounting

**Johnathon Callicoa, NMSU**  
Washington Regulatory and  
Environmental Services

**David Cooper, NM Tech**  
Integrated Waste Handling  
Engineering

**Jason Dugger, UNM**  
Site Environmental Science

**Kimone George, Texas Tech**  
Packaging

**Jordan Henricks, Oklahoma  
State**  
Project Analysis and Control

**Brandon Lackey, NMSU**  
Repository Development Project

**Marcos Lechuga, Texas Tech**  
Central Characterization Project

**Bhavya Malhotra, Texas Tech**  
Project Certification

**Matthew Mathis, ENMU**  
Washington Regulatory and  
Environmental Services

**Michael Nelson, Texas Tech**  
Communication

**Marco Ramos, NMSU**  
I&C Maintenance

**Mandy York, NMSU**  
Human Resources

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Thirteen students in all have come to WIPP in a variety of different departments to gain experience in the field they are pursuing. WIPP required each intern to have a minimum GPA of 3.3 on a 4.0 scale and to have completed 60 hours toward a college degree.

The interns have come to Carlsbad from different colleges both near, and not so near. The furthest any intern traveled to work at WIPP was from Oklahoma State University. Others have come from closer universities, such as New Mexico State and Texas Tech.



Mechanical engineering major Kimone George and business administration major Heather Anderson show off the rock salt samples they collected in the underground.



Broadcast journalism major Mike Nelson reporting live from the lamp room.

"I think learning about safety procedures is good," George said. "I see it in action when the people work, especially underground."

Now, the internship is going to present some difficult tasks for the students, but the most difficult one may be before they arrive at work. Most college students are not morning people due to class and study schedules.

David Cooper, a mechanical engineering major from New Mexico Tech, said he is not looking forward to having to get out of bed so early to take the bus to the site.

"It is a change of lifestyle having to get up earlier than usual," Cooper said.

Either way, the internship is a good way for these students to learn and grow in the field they specialize in. The opportunity for experience for each student is available.

Jason Dugger, a chemistry major from the University of New Mexico, said he knows the internship will prepare him for the future in the field he is pursuing.

"I hope to gain valuable working experience for the future," Dugger said.

They started off the internship with General Employee Training (GET), a crash course on how WIPP is run and the procedures involved. The last day of their training, they toured the site and went underground to see the operations that take place there.

Marcos Lechuga, a mechanical engineering major from Texas Tech, said GET gave him a chance to see what WIPP did as far as safety.

"GET was very educational, stressing how focused the company is on safety," Lechuga said. "I also thought the teachers were entertaining."

Kimone George, a mechanical engineering major from Texas Tech, said she also sees how focused WIPP employees are when it comes to safety.

## Nine employees mark Bike to Work Day



Chad Twitchell riding into the SNL-CPG parking lot.

In recognition of National Bike to Work Week, Chad Twitchell (SNL-CPG) organized a local Bike to Work Day on May 17. The purpose of the event was to promote healthy living and to reduce energy use. Below are the names of those who participated.

Chad Twitchell (SNL-CPG)

Nate Toll (SNL-CPG)

Rick Beauheim (SNL-CPG)

Ed Schaub (SNL-CPG)

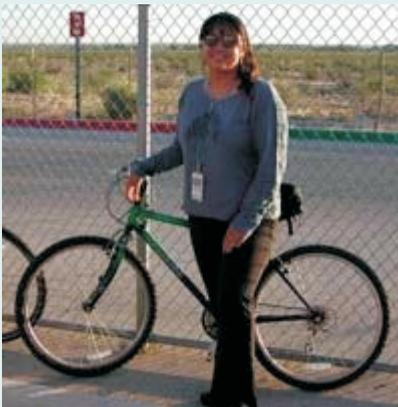
Anne Schaub (SNL-CPG)

Bart Buell (SNL-CPG)

Mike Antiporda (WTS)

Dave Haar (WTS)

Melanie Gravois (WTS)



Melanie Gravois rode in to work at the Skeen-Whitlock Building.

## Many consumer products require an MSDS



Got chemicals? The Occupational Safety and Health Administration require employers to maintain Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for "hazardous materials" employees may be exposed to. Typically, but not always, these are chemical-based products.

We all have preferences for things: colors, clothing, vehicles and even chemical-based consumer products. So trying to maintain an MSDS for all of the chemical-based products on the market would be a nightmare. One way to meet our needs and still comply with federal law in a practical way is to use a standardized product line.

The warehouse stocks nearly two hundred hazardous materials. Before ordering materials that require an MSDS from outside suppliers, please check with the warehouse to see if what you need is already in stock. Their inventory includes hand sanitizers, skin conditioner, bleach, hand cleaner, dishwashing detergent, insecticide, lens cleaners and disinfectant sprays.

These products have an MSDS available in the site electronic MSDS

### Safety Reminder: Container labels

Original containers and labels are always preferred. If it becomes necessary to transfer hazardous materials into a secondary container follow direction given in WP 12-IH.02-4 *WIPP Industrial Hygiene Program - Hazard Communication and Hazardous Materials Management Plan*, labeling section. In short, provide 1) the identity of

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## Happy Birthday Wishes!

**Dondee Groves (L&M)**  
May 25

**Melody Smith (WTS)**  
May 28

**Angela Ashford (L&M)**  
June 2

**Tammy Bowden (CTAC)**  
June 9

**Kerry Watson (CBFO)**  
June 10

**Kevin Aragon (WTS)**  
June 10

**Jan Terpening (WTS)**  
June 10

**Marty Gonzales (WTS)**  
June 14

**Gerry Woolsey (WTS)**  
June 15

**Steve Offner (WTS)**  
June 18

**Yoli Sandate (WTS)**  
June 18

**Steve Childress (WTS)**  
June 19

**Melissa Rojo (CTAC)**  
June 20

**Susan McCauslin (CTAC)**  
June 20

**Gay Pomroy (WTS)**  
June 20

system accessible on the WIPP Intranet by clicking on "MSDS" in the black header. Please read the MSDS and become familiar with products before using them.

the product, and 2) appropriate hazard warnings. Including the site MSDS "W#" is encouraged. NFPA and HMIS secondary labels are available from IS&H.

As always, only buy as much as you need, and practice safe chemical stewardship including being aware of others' sensitivities to chemicals.

**Submitted by: Curtis Potter, WTS Safety and Health**

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## Milligan to Participate in NIRMA Conference

Meg Milligan, Chief Information Officer for CBFO, will be heading to Las Vegas, Nev. in August to participate in a conference for the Nuclear Information Records Management Association (NIRMA).

Milligan did a presentation to DOE headquarters in March titled "Headlight or a Brake light? Points to Ponder on the Information Management Superhighway," related to the destruction of records. Impressed by her presentation, Steve Adams, who works for the National Archives, asked her to submit it to NIRMA.

Milligan says her topic is basic information that people need to hear. She will present to about 350 conference participants.

"There are two kinds of records, paper and electronic," Milligan said. "We have to manage both and it's a tough job." Milligan said the event takes place annually, and the location alternates between Florida and Nevada .

"I prefer Las Vegas, because it's less muggy and buggy," Milligan said. Who could blame her?

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

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

