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WIPP UPDATE: January 5, 2015

DOE Issues Safety Assessments for Diesel-Operated Equipment Underground at WIPP

The Office of Nuclear Safety and Environmental Assessments, within the U.S. Department of Energy's independent Office of Enterprise Assessments (EA), recently issued reports following reviews conducted on the WIPP Recovery Plan for Operating Diesel Equipment with available underground airflows and the Conduct of Maintenance and associated planned program enhancements. The onsite portions of the reviews were completed in October 2014.

The EA reports identified concerns associated with the ventilation plans and engineering approach to the evaluation of diesel equipment operations that existed at the time of the on-site assessment. Resolution of the issues identified was already in progress and, as the report notes, the Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) and the Nuclear Waste Partnership (NWP) had "initiated some positive steps, such as evaluating compensatory measures and seeking a qualified consultant to help evaluate ventilation needs for diesel equipment." CBFO and NWP are also revising ventilation plans based on the current mine ventilation configuration and conditions and implementing air sampling programs that provide continuous air sampling for diesel particulates and other gases necessary to monitor air quality in the underground facility. Engineered modeling and real-time monitoring of diesel emissions in the underground facility helps ensure safe, breathable air for all employees.

Worker safety is taken very seriously and air quality in the underground facility is one of WIPP's highest priorities. The EA reports are available on the web at:

<http://www.energy.gov/ea/services/assessments/environment-safety-and-health-assessments/review-reports>

Next WIPP Town Hall Meeting Scheduled January 8

The City of Carlsbad and DOE will co-host its Town Hall meeting featuring updates on WIPP recovery activities. The meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 8 at 5:30 p.m. Location: Carlsbad City Council Chambers, 101 N. Halagueno Street. Live streaming of the meeting can be seen at <http://new.livestream.com/rrv/>.