

A biweekly e-newsletter for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant team

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By the Numbers

Shipments scheduled to arrive at WIPP week of 07/11/04 - 07/17/04:

20

Total shipments received at WIPP as of 07/07/04:

2,755

Total volume disposed at WIPP as of 07/07/04:

21,720 m³

Corporate Board sets draft shipment schedule for FY05

The National Transuranic Waste Program Corporate Board (Corporate Board) met on Thursday, June 24, in Boulder, Colorado. The Corporate Board manages DOE generator sites and WIPP as an integrated corporate business and includes senior DOE and contractor representatives from the TRU waste sites that are actively shipping waste to WIPP.



The main topic for June's meeting was the development of a draft TRU waste shipment schedule for fiscal year 2005 (FY05). Computer modeling scenarios generated by WTS and SNL/CPG personnel were used in the planning process.

WTS Transportation Manager Kim Jackson explains, "The shipment schedule must take into account different factors from all of the sites.

Needless to say, there are many variables that must be considered. Using modeling techniques enables us to choose a schedule that maximizes TRUPACT-II utilization and personnel resources."

A second goal for the shipment schedule was to level-load receipts through the facility, evenly over a seven-day period. "Level-loading not only helps WIPP to maximize our resources, such as surface storage capacity and personnel, it also alleviates bottlenecks at ports-of-entry where the trucks are inspected," Jackson says.

The Corporate Board set an aggressive draft shipment schedule for FY05 that projects a range of 87 - 90 TRUPACT-IIs per week through WIPP. Generator sites projected to ship waste in FY05 include RFETS, LANL, Hanford, LLNL, NTS and SRS. INEEL will also ship to WIPP and expects significant acceleration in shipping rates for 2005.

"The projected shipment schedule for FY05 will challenge generator sites and WIPP," continues Jackson. "Our biggest challenges are to support INEEL in shipping 6,000 cubic meters by December 2005, as part of the State of Idaho's Batt Agreement and to complete all TRU waste legacy shipments from RFETS by April 2005."

Other topics discussed by the Corporate Board included an exchange of lessons learned presentations given by generator facilities. The exchange of knowledge gained through operational experience improves the waste characterization and transportation programs at all of the sites within the DOE complex. Site representatives also shared their ideas on how they would overcome site-specific issues in order to meet new shipment schedule commitments.

The draft shipment schedule is currently under review by all involved facilities and should be finalized within the next few months.



The following public notice was published in key state newspapers Thursday to notify the public of upcoming information meetings concerning a Class 2 permit modification request. The modification is designed to establish a procedure for approving WIPP disposal of TRU mixed tank wastes. See details in the July 22 edition of *TRU TeamWorks*.

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PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS



Proposed Modification to the Hazardous Waste Facility Permit for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

WHO: U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Carlsbad Field Office and Washington TRU Solutions LLC (WTS)

WHAT: DOE and WTS will conduct public meetings to provide information on the following requested permit modification. There will be a 60-day public comment period beginning on July 8, 2004.

WHEN: Tuesday, August 10, 2004 5 – 7 p.m. Thursday, August 12, 2004 2 – 4 p.m. & 6 – 8 p.m.

WHERE: Skeen-Whitlock Building 4021 National Parks Highway Carlsbad, New Mexico Courtyard by Marriott 3347 Cerrillos Road Santa Fe, New Mexico

WHY: On July 2, 2004, DOE submitted the following Class 2 permit modification request to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED).
Procedure for Consideration of Tank Waste at WIPP (Class 2) — this modification request will establish a procedure for approving the disposal of transuranic (TRU) mixed waste from tanks that has ever been managed as high-level waste. The proposed procedure will prohibit WIPP from accepting and disposing of this tank waste unless it has been approved by NMED through a Class 3 permit modification. Any such waste approved for disposal at WIPP as the result of a permit modification will still be required to meet all WIPP waste acceptance criteria (i.e., no liquids, ignitables, corrosives, etc).

HOW: To obtain additional information concerning this permit modification request, contact Mr. Bobby St. John, WTS, at 1-800-336-9477. The permit modification is also available on the WIPP Web site at <http://www.wipp.ws> and at the WIPP Information Center, Skeen-Whitlock Building, 4021 National Parks Highway, Carlsbad, New Mexico. A copy of the requested permit modification also may be obtained from NMED at the address listed below.

COMMENT: Written comments for the record must be sent to the NMED contact person at the address below and received no later than 5 p.m. on September 7, 2004.
Mr. Steve Zappe
New Mexico Environment Department
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1
Santa Fe, NM 87505
Phone: 505-428-2517
Fax: 505-428-2567
E-mail: steve_zappe@nmenv.state.nm.us

The Permittees' compliance history during the life of the permit being modified is available from Mr. Zappe at NMED.

QUESTION: Questions or comments for the Permittees regarding this permit modification may be sent to Mr. Bobby St. John, P.O. Box 2078, Carlsbad, NM 88221, no later than August 30, 2004.

Tribal partners - part II

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In the June 24 edition of *TRU TeamWorks*, we highlighted the Native American tribes along WIPP shipping routes in New Mexico. WIPP trucks traveling west to sites in Washington, Idaho and Arizona also pass through the territories of sovereign tribal nations, specifically, the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla, Navajo Nation and the Shoshone-Bannock tribes.

DOE began working with the key tribal partners long before WIPP opened to ensure the safety of shipments that would cross tribal lands. DOE has assisted the tribes with funding for emergency response capabilities, training and various educational opportunities. Since the early '90s, WIPP External Emergency Management trainers have trained approximately 400 tribal members from the three tribal nations. Training was offered free of charge to prepare them to respond in the unlikely event of an accident involving a WIPP shipment. Below is a brief introduction to each tribe.

Confederated Tribes of Umatilla

The Confederated Tribes of Umatilla was created when three tribes consolidated: the Walla Walla, Umatilla, and Cayuse. In 1855, the tribes signed a treaty making the merger official. Today, there are approximately 2,500 members of the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla who share a 172,000-acre reserve in the state of Oregon. There are 3,000 residents on the Umatilla Reservation, which include 1,500 non-Native Americans.

Navajo Nation

Established by treaty in 1868, the Navajo Nation is the largest in the United States, occupying more than 25,000 square miles of land. The tribal roster includes 210,000 members located in New Mexico, Utah and Arizona.

The Navajo are widely known for their valor during World War II. As part of U.S. military operations in the Pacific, Navajo "code talkers" used their native language to pass messages between command locations. The Japanese, though skilled at deciphering coded messages, were unable to crack the Navajo "code," ensuring the safety of U.S. troop movements.

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes

Originally, two distinct tribes, the Shoshone and Bannock, incorporated on the Fort Hall Reservation in 1868. Today, Idaho's Shoshone-Bannock tribes boast 4,000 members and manage 525,000 acres of combined tribal lands. Like many Native American tribes, gaming is a major source of income for the Shoshone-Bannock, generating some \$3 - 4 million per year for the tribes.



Trade magazine features WIPP project controls

WIPP is featured in the most recent edition of Primavera magazine, published by the Primavera software company. Author Jennifer Pittman's article focuses on the WIPP mission and the role Primavera Enterprise software plays in project planning and performance reporting.

Primavera Enterprise was used in the development and implementation of the complex-wide integration tool (CWIT), a resource-loaded schedule of the WIPP lifecycle. John Bennett, WTS project manager and team lead for CWIT, led software implementation efforts and development of the National TRU Waste Program (NTWP) lifecycle. "The Project Analysis and Control team is to be credited for its skill and hard work in getting this system up and going," says Bennett, adding, "I just directed traffic."

Every operation is subject to variances in planning - NTWP is no exception. Primavera project management software allows WTS to integrate lifecycle scope, budget, strategic initiatives and DOE Headquarters-driven milestones into one database. The data enable decision-makers to analyze the complex-wide effects of variances on NTWP schedules and effectively manage the "unplanned."



John Bennett will soon leave WIPP to support Washington Group International in Iraq.

Bennett will soon leave WIPP to work for Washington Group International in Iraq. The experience he gained working on the CWIT project will be invaluable in his new job as project controls manager. "The CWIT project taught me many lessons that will help in the expected rapid ramp-up of controls to support Washington Group projects in Iraq."

Washington Group has several independent projects ongoing in Iraq; Bennett's first task will be to develop and integrate a control system to standardize planning and reporting functions for the Iraq projects. Washington Group is working under contract to the Army Corp of Engineers in Iraq.

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The bees of summer

There's a buzz in the air. With summer's sunny days and warm temperatures, it's time once again to be on the lookout for bees. Whether at the WIPP site, at an in-town office building or out in the community, it's important to minimize our interaction with bees, whose attacks in the last few years have ranged from minor, but painful, to deadly.

In June 2000, an aggressive swarm of bees was "house hunting," so to speak and found itself at the Skeen-Whitlock Building on National Parks Highway. In the process, they swarmed onto several vehicles that approached the immediate area. Ron Crockett, a local expert on bees, later determined that they were not Africanized bees, but rather regular honeybees that were particularly aggressive because the queen bee was among them.



At the WIPP site, one of the concerns with bees and wasps is when they are pulled underground through the Air Intake Shaft. Being sucked nearly one-half mile underground through the darkness tends to make them very angry upon arrival in the repository.

However, most stings have occurred aboveground. Confirmed or suspected bee or wasp stings have been reported 15 times

since early 2002 at numerous locations, including at indoor work stations. Fortunately, all of these cases were minor first-aid cases, unlike the July 2000 attack in the community that killed an elderly Carlsbad resident.

Specially trained WIPP employees assisted in the response to that deadly attack and continue to provide response capability and prevention to WIPP and community. "We've responded to requests for assistance from Eddy County and the Living Desert State Park," says Paul Hoffman, the leader of WIPP's anti-bee effort. Hoffman, along with Morgan Nail and Luke Meadors were trained by Eddy County Extension Agent Woods Houghton. WIPP has five bee suits.

Few stings have been reported at WIPP so far this year, a fact due in part to an emphasis on prevention. "Employees are doing a good job of letting us know about hives and wasp nests," says Hoffman. "Once informing us, they've been backing away and allowing us to take care of it." So far, employee reports have led to the elimination of two bee hives and about 10 wasp nests.

If we continue to stay on top of the issue, the buzz in the air may turn out to be about the lack of buzzing in the air.

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Repair or replace - the great debate

At WIPP, purchasing, property and financial staff work to streamline purchases and save taxpayer dollars whenever possible. For example, Ann Morissette, team leader for Property Management, recently raised an issue about the high cost of repairing fax machines. The issue centers on the debate about whether it's more cost effective to repair or replace equipment.

"One of the things to consider before having a piece of equipment repaired is the age of the equipment and the costs of repairing versus purchasing a new one," says Morissette. She offered the following example:

Under the current repair contract at WIPP, there is a \$170 fee for each visit per fax machine. When the estimated cost of parts and labor for installing a new drum in the machine is added, the total bill is about \$372. That's a pretty hefty bill, considering that the cost of new fax machines are comparable (see table below). As a general rule, when the repair cost of the item exceeds 75 percent of its replacement value, purchasing of a new item should be considered.

<p>Approximate cost for a service call, parts and labor to replace a drum on a fax machine:</p> <p>\$372</p>	<p>Cost to purchase a new fax machine:</p> <p>plain fax machine: \$150-\$250</p> <p>multifunction fax machine: \$245-\$400</p>
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The repair or replace debate isn't limited to only fax machines. The same logic applies to other equipment. The cost of repairing equipment not covered by a repair contract is often charged to government credit cards, but Morissette cautions people to shop around. "Card holders need to make sure they are getting the best value for their purchase."

Finally, when purchasing any equipment, Morissette suggests careful evaluation of the available options. "Do you really need all those bells and whistles?" she asks. "How many of them do you really use?" Opting for more basic models that do everything that you really need is another way to keep costs down and eliminate government waste. And that gives employees, taxpayers and politicians something to smile about.

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Portage announces contract award

Portage Environmental recently won an Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence (AFCEE) Global Engineering, Integration and Technical Assistance (GEITA) follow-on contract for support in San Antonio and at the Massachusetts Military Reservation (MMR). The one-year award, valued at over \$800,000, includes AFCEE program support for MMR, cost and scheduling support, MAJCOM support, budget analysis, document review, high-level technical assistance and field oversight.

Portage AFCEE Program Manager Craig Waller states, "The issuance of this follow-on work for AFCEE shows Portage's commitment to quality and client satisfaction."

Portage Environmental is a Native American-owned small business.

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Birthdays

Todd Sellmer (WTS) - July 6
Gloria Johnson (WTS) - July 8
Barry Brown (WTS) - July 9
Pete Rodriguez (CTAC) - July 9
Vivian Allen (L&M) - July 10
Tom Goff (WTS) - July 10
Susan Scott (WTS) - July 10
Mike Fox (L&M) - July 12

Sandra Harrison (CTAC) - July 14
Vernon Daub (CTAC) - July 15
Steve Warren (WTS) - July 15
Dawn Estes (WTS) - July 17
Cathy Lees (WTS) - July 19
Deb Biscaino (L&M) - July 20
Bill Thompson (CTAC) - July 21

Fire School attendees complete training



Congratulations to WIPP employees who recently returned from training at the State Fire Academy in Socorro, New Mexico. Top left to right: **Two Roswell cadets, J.R. Sanchez, Daniel Dominguez, Zeke Gomez, Robert Valenzuela and Bob Paslay.** Kneeling left to right: **Alan Pistole, Charles Granger, Mickey Lovell and John Catano.**