UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Washington, DC 20460

September 22, 2022

OFFICE OF
AIR AND
RADIATION

Mr. Michael Gerle
Director, Environmental Regulatory Compliance
Carlsbad Field Office
U.S. Department of Energy
P.O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221-3090

Dear Mr. Gerle:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency conducted an on-site inspection of the waste emplacement program at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant from May 24 to May 26, 2022. During its post-inspection review of WIPP documentation, EPA identified an error in reporting the magnesium oxide (MgO) excess factor in the Summary of Waste Emplacement Inventory Report generated by the Waste Data System (WDS). This error results in reporting the excess factor for all rooms in a panel as the numerical value of the room with the same id number of that panel (e.g., the MgO excess factor calculated for Room 6 in Panel 6 would be assigned to all rooms in that panel). This error may propagate into documents or databases that use data from the Summary of Waste Emplacement Inventory Report.

EPA identified this MgO excess factor issue as an inspection concern requiring a written response. This error has been discussed with Carlsbad Field Office staff, and it is our understanding that WDS administrators are invoking the WDS problem reporting process to address the error. However, as of the date of this letter, the issue has not been resolved. Please provide us with information on how this error will be addressed and the time frame in which it will be addressed.

EPA will finish the inspection report upon a satisfactory review of the requested documents. If you have any questions concerning this request, please contact Xinyue Tong at (202) 343-9844 or tong.xinyue@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Tom Peake
Digitally signed by Tom Peake
Date: 2022.09.22 14:43:43 -04'00'

Tom Peake
Director, Center for Waste Management and Regulations

cc: Electronic Distribution
Anderson Ward, DOE/CBFO
Judy McLemore, RES
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