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WIPP UPDATE: December 4, 2015

Ground Control Progress Continues at WIPP

Underground Operations Personnel at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) have made significant progress since resuming ground control operations just over a year ago. Ground control is necessary to ensure a safe environment for employees working 2,150 feet below the surface in the WIPP underground. Ground control includes, but is not limited to, installation of steel bolts of various lengths into the roof and walls of the mine. These bolts help support and slow the natural movement that occurs in the underground salt formation where WIPP is located. Since resumption of ground control activities last November, more than 5,400 bolts have been installed. This includes replacement of broken bolts and the installation of new bolts in both the uncontaminated and contaminated areas in the underground.



An underground operations worker uses the one of the new hybrid bolting machines to drill a hole in preparation for installing a steel bolt as part of the ground control process.

A second hybrid bolting machine was recently received at the WIPP facility and will be placed in service following operational checks. The hybrid bolting machines run on either diesel or electric power and will further enhance WIPP's ability to increase ground control activities. Under the current limited ventilation conditions, the amount of diesel equipment that can be operated in the WIPP underground at any given time is restricted. The hybrid machines allow for additional bolting activities, without impacting other operations that require the use of diesel equipment.

Next WIPP Town Hall Meeting Scheduled January 7

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, January 7 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/rvv/>.