



U.S. Department of Energy
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WIPP UPDATE: May 19, 2014

Labs investigate drum content

Last week a photograph showed a waste container with a cracked lid and heat damage, providing further evidence of a significant heat event in WIPP's Room 7 of Panel 7. The investigation into the exact cause of the release is ongoing.

Los Alamos and Savannah River National Laboratories are testing the waste stream's chemical and radiological content and looking at possible scenarios for what might have caused a reaction in the drum.

Waste containers from the suspect waste stream are temporarily stored at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and Waste Control Specialists (WCS) in Andrews County, Texas. WIPP is continuing to work with LANL and WCS to further secure the waste containers to ensure the safety of employees and the public.

Recovery teams will enter Panel 7 early this week to determine the extent of conditions in Panel 7 and if additional containers also may have been breached. The focus of this week's entry will be to obtain pictures from all sides of the waste stack where the breached drum was observed, and to obtain pictures further down along the sides of the waste stack.

CBFO Manager's Weekly Update to Local Residents

Read Carlsbad Field Office Manager Joe Franco's letter to Eddy and Lea County residents at http://www.wipp.energy.gov/pr/2014/5_19_14_CBFO_Manager_Ltr.pdf.

Community Meetings Scheduled

- May 20: A WIPP Recovery update will be provided at the Economic Development Corporation of Lea County annual meeting. The update, provided by a member of the NWP Communications team, is scheduled for 11:30 a.m. at the Hobbs Country Club, 5001 W. Carlsbad Highway.
- May 22: The City of Carlsbad and DOE will co-host its weekly Town Hall meeting featuring updates on WIPP recovery activities. The meeting is scheduled at 5:30 p.m. at the Carlsbad City Council Chambers, 101 N. Halagueno Street. Live streaming of the weekly meetings can be seen at <http://new.livestream.com/rrv/>.