



U.S. Department of Energy
Carlsbad Field Office
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant
P.O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221

Media Contact:

Tim Runyon
WIPP Recovery Communications
(575) 234-7545

www.wipp.energy.gov

 @WIPPNews

WIPP UPDATE: May 21, 2015

Work Begins on Interim Ventilation System

Recovery operations at the WIPP facility continue to move forward with work beginning on installation of the interim ventilation system. This system will increase the overall amount of airflow in the underground facility from the 60,000 cubic feet per minute (CFM) available under the current configuration up to 114,000 CFM. Following the radiological event of February 2014, all air exiting the WIPP underground passes through High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters prior to being released into the environment. As a result, the amount of air that can be used to ventilate the underground is reduced based on the filter capacity. The reduced airflow limits the number of workers that can be in the underground and the number of liquid fueled pieces of equipment that can be operated in the underground at any one time. The interim ventilation system will provide additional filters and fans that will increase the overall amount of airflow in the underground facility.

The interim ventilation system includes two skid-mounted HEPA filter units and fan units that will be placed on concrete foundations and connected to ductwork that exits in the WIPP underground. The concrete pads were poured this week and are required to cure or dry for 28 days before the skid-mounted filter units can be installed. Once the interim ventilation system is installed, the filter units will be operated in parallel with the existing HEPA filters and fans, increasing the overall amount of airflow and allowing additional workers and equipment in the underground.



Work is complete on the installation of the concrete foundations that will support the interim ventilation system HEPA units.

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Next WIPP Town Hall Meeting Scheduled June 4

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, June 4 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/>.