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WIPP UPDATE: June 2, 2014

Samples collected from WIPP underground

On May 30, an entry team collected several samples from the WIPP underground, as part of the ongoing effort to determine the cause of the drum breach. Collections include magnesium oxide (MgO) samples taken near the breached drum in Room 7, Panel 7, and a sample of material believed to have originated from the breached drum. Additional MgO samples were also taken from various locations around the waste stacks. Workers also took video in Room 7, which is currently being reviewed. Photos from this entry are available on the website.

Ventilation tests complete

This weekend, in preparation for the HEPA filter replacement, workers completed ventilation system re-alignment to reduce airflow in the WIPP underground to accommodate isolation of one of the two filter units. During filter replacement, a single exhaust fan will operate to prevent unfiltered air from reaching the environment. Replacement of the filters will begin next week and take several weeks to complete. During this time, underground entries will be halted, and workers not focused on the filter replacement will perform maintenance on above-ground facilities and equipment.

Community meetings scheduled

June 5 – The City of Carlsbad and DOE will co-host its weekly meeting featuring updates on WIPP recovery activities. The meeting is scheduled Thursday at 5:30 p.m. Location: Carlsbad City Council Chambers, 101 N. Halagueno Street. Live streaming of the weekly meetings can be seen at <http://new.livestream.com/rrv/>. This will be the beginning of a new schedule in which the Town Hall meetings will be held the first and third Thursdays of the month.