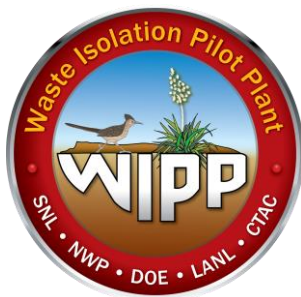



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WIPP UPDATE: June 2, 2016

DSA Implemented and Cold Operations Begin

The Department of Energy's (DOE) Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) reached a major milestone last week that cleared the way for the start of Cold Operations at the facility. Implementation of the Documented Safety Analysis (DSA) revision 5, which defines the safety parameters under which WIPP operates, was declared complete on May 29, following several weeks of intense work by the federal and contractor workforce.

Cold Operations, the phase of WIPP's restart that involves conducting facility operations with simulated waste containers, got underway on June 1, beginning an eight-week process to demonstrate the adequacy of procedures. Many of these procedures have not been used for more than two years because of the February 2014 events that closed WIPP. The purpose of Cold Operations is to establish worker proficiency prior to the beginning of formal Operational Readiness Reviews (ORRs).

"These are exciting times for us at WIPP," said Todd Shrader, Manager of DOE's Carlsbad Field Office. "After more than two years of recovering the facility, we are now beginning the formalized process to restart WIPP. The next few months will be extremely busy, but also very rewarding for our workforce. I want to thank every employee for their hard work. I also want to thank our host communities, Carlsbad and Hobbs, for their continued support through the recovery process."

The Cold Operations Plan uses a graded approach that begins with table-top practical exercises, proceeds to field walk down of work activities, and follows with slow, disciplined field implementation using thoroughly vetted procedures. The process will be complete after employees demonstrate proficiency in their respective work areas, while at the same time responding to random interruptions, abnormal conditions, and an occasional emergency challenge that exercises the site emergency response organization.

These activities are designed to ensure that staff and procedures are well integrated. Cold Operations will also confirm equipment performance, confirm the readiness of procedures, and demonstrate the performance and knowledge of employees representing waste handling, maintenance, underground services, work planning, industrial hygiene, safety, engineering, radiological controls, and the emergency response organization.

The Interim Ventilation System (IVS) will also be operated and further evaluated within the scope of Cold Operations. When operational, IVS is expected to increase airflow in the WIPP underground by approximately 54,000 cubic feet per minute.

Once Cold Operations are completed, the contractor will perform a Management Self-Assessment, which will be followed by Operational Readiness Reviews by teams assembled by both the contractor and the Carlsbad Field

Office. Once the contractor and DOE have completed their respective ORRs, resolution of any pre-start findings are completed, and regulatory reviews and approvals have been received from the New Mexico Environment Department, DOE can give final approval for commencement of waste emplacement at WIPP.

Next WIPP Town Hall Meeting Scheduled Today

The City of Carlsbad and DOE will co-host a Town Hall meeting to provide updates on WIPP recovery and restart activities, including more detailed information on the DSA. The meeting is scheduled for today 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/>.