




U.S. Department of Energy
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WIPP UPDATE: July 22, 2014

Entries into WIPP underground resume

Entries into the WIPP underground facility have resumed after being suspended for several weeks while workers changed air filters on the WIPP Ventilation System. The Accident Investigation Board (AIB) has completed their examination in most of the underground facility. However, Room 7 Panel 7 will be inaccessible to recovery workers until the AIB investigation is completed.

On July 18, employees entered the underground facility to conduct radiological surveys and evaluate ground control conditions to ensure the continued safety of future entry teams. They also tested a localized power unit and substation, identifying the reasons for its inoperability. Workers are now preparing to repair the unit during an upcoming entry.

Water levels in the waste shaft sump are significant because contact with the steel tail ropes for the 45-ton Waste Hoist may have resulted in contamination of the ropes. During the July 18 entry, the team also checked the water level and determined it was well below the level required to make contact with the ropes. This finding will facilitate the waste hoist's return to service and should allow additional personnel and equipment to be transported to the underground facility in support of recovery activities.

Community meetings scheduled

July 24 – The City of Carlsbad and DOE will co-host a town hall meeting featuring updates on WIPP recovery activities. The meeting is scheduled 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/rvy/>.