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## **WIPP UPDATE: July 28, 2016**

### **WIPP Begins Preliminary Work on New Permanent Ventilation System**

The geotechnical investigation necessary for construction of a new Permanent Ventilation System (PVS), including a new filter building and a new exhaust shaft, is underway at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). Investigation activities include drilling multiple bore holes and the collection of core samples at various depths. Analysis of the core samples will provide information for the building design team on geologic support capacity, seismic design parameters and building foundation design requirements.

The design for the new PVS will include a new unfiltered exhaust shaft and a 55,000-square-foot filter building installed east of the existing filter building. The new building will replace the existing system that currently filters air exiting the underground through high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters.

The new PVS will use the existing air exhaust shaft and provide a modern safety-significant confinement ventilation system with the capacity to provide up to 540,000 cubic feet per minute. The new filtration system will have 22 separate HEPA filter banks to filter the exhaust air exiting the underground.

The new exhaust shaft, the second part of the PVS, will provide WIPP operators with the capability to configure airflow in the WIPP underground into dual circuits. The dual airflow circuits will allow waste emplacement, maintenance, bolting and mining activities to take place concurrently. A



Subcontractors prepare to begin bore hole drilling in support of constructing a new Permanent Ventilation System at WIPP.

separate, unfiltered circuit is necessary because salt dust from mining operations would otherwise clog the HEPA filters.

Due to the current limitation on airflow in the WIPP underground, waste emplacement and mining activities will need to be conducted separately when operations resume. All exhaust air is currently filtered because some limited areas of the WIPP underground remain contaminated as a result of the radiological event of February 2014.

#### **Next WIPP Town Hall Meeting Set for August 4**

The City of Carlsbad and DOE co-host Town Hall meetings to provide updates on WIPP restart activities. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 4, at 5:30 p.m. Location: Carlsbad City Council Chambers, 101 N. Halagueno Street. WIPP Town Hall Meetings are live streamed at <http://new.livestream.com/rrv/>.