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WIPP UPDATE: August 5, 2015

WIPP Activates Emergency Operations Center

At approximately 7:00 p.m. MDT on Tuesday, August 4, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) activated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the Joint Information Center (JIC) after a radiological control technician detected what was believed to be elevated radiological readings on a filter from an air particulate sampler located where air is exhausted from the WIPP underground. It was later determined that an error was made in the calculation of initial survey results, which resulted in a false elevated reading that triggered the notification to the Central Monitoring Room and subsequent activation of the EOC and JIC.

By procedure, WIPP personnel on the surface were directed to stay inside buildings, or shelter in place, when the elevated readings were first detected. Underground personnel were staged at an assembly area and accounted for. Radiological control technicians continued to conduct confirmatory radiological surveys on the surface and in the underground, none of which showed any abnormal radiological readings. All employees were released and the event was terminated at approximately 11: 30 p.m.

Although it was determined that there was no emergency or radiological release, WIPP Operations and Emergency Management personnel responded appropriately according to their training and procedures, which included the correct classification and categorization of the event, ensuring the appropriate protective measures were in place for employees and the public, and providing timely information to all stakeholders.

Next WIPP Town Hall Meeting Scheduled August 6

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, August 6 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/rvv/>.