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WIPP UPDATE: September 23, 2014

WIPP facilities mostly unscathed as SENM deals with Hurricane Odile

Hurricane Odile left its mark on Southeastern New Mexico, but the WIPP facility came away mostly unscathed with two brief partial power outages that delayed entries into the underground facility last week.

Over the past 10 days, areas of Carlsbad and Eddy County received about 15 inches of rain that wreaked havoc on infrastructure and left dozens of people stranded. Managers with the WIPP Emergency Management Department and several members of the Joint Information Center provided around the clock support to the Eddy County Emergency Operations Center over the weekend and on Monday, with half a dozen trained emergency response/communications professionals answering incoming calls and providing other support.

At the WIPP site, employees made several entries into the underground facility over the weekend and on Monday to continue assessing underground radiological and ground conditions. Maintenance personnel have begun maintenance on diesel and gas-powered equipment necessary to resume operations in support of underground rock bolting activities that will ensure stable ground conditions.