



The Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

March 24, 2004

The Honorable Mike Leavitt
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Leavitt:

I am pleased to send to you the first Compliance Recertification Application (CRA) for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) as required by Section 8(f) of the WIPP Land Withdrawal Act. The CRA documents WIPP's continued compliance with the requirements of 40 C.F.R. Part 191, *Environmental Radiation Protection Standards for Management and Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel, High-Level and Transuranic Radioactive Wastes*. Disposal operations began at WIPP on March 26, 1999, after the Environmental Protection Agency certified that WIPP complied with these requirements after evaluating the information the Department of Energy provided to the Environmental Protection Agency in the 1996 Compliance Certification Application.

The CRA incorporates information and analyses from the 1996 Compliance Certification Application. It presents an updated performance assessment based on information the Department of Energy has collected since 1996 and on additional analyses performed since that time. The information and analyses reflect new waste inventory information, changes to WIPP facilities and operations, and improved models of events and processes that could affect the repository's performance.

The Department of Energy will provide any additional information or analytical support needed to complete the Environmental Protection Agency's review. The Department appreciates the Environmental Protection Agency's past work on the WIPP project and looks forward to assisting the Agency with its evaluation of the recertification application.



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If you have any questions, please call me or Ms. Jessie Hill Roberson, Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, at (202) 586-7709.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Spencer Abraham". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "S".

Spencer Abraham

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Bill Richardson
Governor of New Mexico
Senator Jeff Bingaman
Senator Pete V. Domenici
Congresswoman Heather Wilson
Congressman Steve Pearce
Congressman Tom Udall