



Department of Energy

Carlsbad Field Office
P. O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221
April 11, 2013

Eddy and Lea Country Residents:

As we approach the end of another week of recovery operations at the U.S. Department of Energy's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), our team continues making progress in our efforts to return the site to full disposal operations.

We remain focused on sending additional teams into the underground facility to identify the location and source of the February 14 radiological event. Nuclear Waste Partnership (NWP), our contractor, is currently evaluating personal protection equipment and procedures associated with entering the waste disposal area to ensure worker safety, which is always our top priority.

We are using all available tools as we work through the recovery process. This week, salt samples arrived at the Idaho National Laboratory where technicians will contaminate the salt to replicate possible conditions in the WIPP's waste disposal area. The study should help determine the most effective methods for cleaning up any areas in the underground facility with contamination as a result of the radiological release, which is an important part of the recovery plan.

Bioassay sampling of employees is also nearing completion. To ensure the most accurate reporting, we've requested that the Radiation Emergency Assistance Center/Training Site and their expert medical radiological consultants conduct a final review of the samples.

This week, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) employees visited WIPP to install additional air monitors near our existing on-site air monitors to take independent samples. They are also evaluating the number and location of WIPP's current environmental monitors to identify any needed improvements or adjustments.

NWP also issued their proposed corrective action plan concerning the underground truck fire Accident Investigation Board report this week, which we are currently reviewing.

We will continue to provide the daily website updates, periodic management letters, and town hall meetings every Thursday at 5:30 p.m. at the Carlsbad City Hall.

Sincerely,

//Signature on File//

Jose R. Franco, Manager
U.S. Department of Energy
Carlsbad Field Office