



Department of Energy
Carlsbad Field Office
P. O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221
April 5, 2014

To Eddy and Lea County Residents:

This week, we have accomplished several significant activities that are crucial to paving the way for waste disposal at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), and I wanted to make sure you had the latest information.

A considerable portion of our recent communications has focused on sampling results. Those employees who received positive bioassay results for exposure are at extremely low levels. The estimated dose from these exposures is well below the level that would cause health concerns. Also, water and vegetation samples surrounding the site are coming back negative for contamination.

We have taken extraordinary measures over the last several weeks to confirm that the Air Intake and Salt Shafts had no radiological contamination, to ensure our employees were safe and prepared for re-entry, and that conditions are carefully monitored.

On Wednesday, two teams of workers entered the underground facility for the first time since the February 14 event. Once in the mine, they established a clean base of operations near the Salt Shaft. This critical first step will allow future teams to go farther into the underground facility as they work to identify the source of the release.

We have also been able to continue making progress on our commitment to the State of New Mexico to remove 3706 cubic meters of transuranic waste from the Los Alamos National Laboratory by June 30. On Monday, Nuclear Waste Partnership (NWP), our contractor at WIPP, finalized a contract to temporarily stage transuranic waste at the Waste Control Specialist facility in Andrews, Texas until we resume disposal operations at WIPP. Five shipments have arrived at the facility this week.

Progress is being made, and we are working tirelessly to return our site to normal operations. The Department and NWP both have recovery teams in place with experts from WIPP and across the Department's complex. However, the recovery process is not without its challenges. We expect the Accident Investigation report on the radiological release in the near future that will include several areas needing improvement. Meanwhile, we are actively implementing procedures and training that bolsters our emergency management practices and aids the protection of our workers and the public from any potential events in the future.

Thank you for your continued understanding throughout this recovery process. You have my utmost commitment to do everything necessary to keep our employees and community safe while striving to resume our mission at the site. To stay informed, we will continue to provide the daily website updates and town hall meetings every Thursday at 5:30 p.m.

Sincerely,
//Signature on File//
Jose R. Franco, Manager
U.S. Department of Energy
Carlsbad Field Office