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*For Immediate Release*

## **First LANL Shipment Arrives at Waste Control Specialists Facility**

ANDREWS, Texas, April 2, 2014 – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Nuclear Waste Partnership (NWP) today announced that the first transuranic waste shipment arrived at the Waste Control Specialists facility in Andrews, Texas. Defense-related transuranic waste will be temporarily staged at the commercial facility until the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) resumes disposal operations.

The shipment originated from Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in northern New Mexico, and reinforces DOE's commitment to removing 3,706 cubic meters of transuranic waste at the lab by June 30, 2014. Up to 100 shipments from LANL may be required and, after an initial ramp up period, as many as 10 shipments per week will be scheduled.

The Department will permanently dispose of the containers at WIPP when waste disposal activities resume. WIPP is currently in recovery from two unrelated events that occurred in February, an underground vehicle fire and a small radioactive release. The WIPP site first opened in 1999 and has been instrumental in the cleanup of legacy transuranic waste from 22 sites across the nation.

NWP's one-year contract with Waste Control Specialists is valued at \$8.8 million. Waste Control Specialists operates a commercial treatment, storage and disposal facility licensed and permitted for radioactive waste management.

All shipments to Waste Control Specialists will be made in accordance with current WIPP shipping requirements, using WIPP shipping containers, trucks, trailers and highly skilled

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personnel. DOE and NWP will continue working closely with New Mexico and Texas to ensure that only waste meeting the facility's waste acceptance criteria is shipped to the facility.

Transuranic waste consists of clothing, tools, rags, debris, soil, and other items contaminated with small amounts of radioactive elements, mostly plutonium. Each of these man-made elements has an atomic number greater than uranium. About 90 percent of the current transuranic waste inventory is the result of decades of nuclear research and weapons production at the Laboratory.

NWP is the management and operating contractor for WIPP, America's only operating deep geologic repository for the permanent disposal of defense-related transuranic nuclear waste, located 26 miles southeast of Carlsbad, N.M.



**Photo Caption:** Transuranic waste shipments from Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico arrived safely this morning at the Waste Control Specialists facility in Andrews, Texas.