



**CARLSBAD AREA OFFICE
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
WEEK ENDING APRIL 28, 2000**

PRIORITIES

- Establish CAO as the interface to NMED, implementing HQ policy.
- Assist the TRU waste sites in complying with the RCRA permit.
- Ramp up TRU Waste Shipments to 5 per week.
- Strive for efficiencies in waste characterization, certification, transportation and disposal.
- Maintain the WIPP Site in a superior state of safety, health, and operational readiness.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Mayor of Oskarshamn Sweden, Mr. Torsten Carlsson, and several members of the municipality staff toured the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant on April 27, 2000. The mayor and his staff received briefings on the mission and toured both the underground and surface waste handling facilities.
- The Rocky Flats Environmental and Technology Site made two shipments of non-mixed TRU waste this week. Both shipments arrived safely at the WIPP site.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

- None to report

UPCOMING MEETINGS/REVIEWS/AUDITS

- The CAO Mid-Year Program Review is scheduled May 17, 2000. The Headquarters EM Corporate Forum is scheduled May 23 - 25, 2000.
- Public meetings on proposed New Mexico Hazardous Waste Act Permit Class 1 & II modifications will be held May 16 in the auditorium of the CAO's Skeen-Whitlock Building in Carlsbad, and May 18 at the Hilton of Santa Fe in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Both meetings will consist of two sessions - 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Stakeholders will have an opportunity to learn about the proposed modifications and

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submit written comments to the New Mexico Environment Department. The comment period ends June 5.

- The 70th WIPP Quarterly Review is scheduled May 4, 2000, in Carlsbad. The CAO will host the meeting.

**CARLSBAD AREA OFFICE
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
WEEK ENDING APRIL 14, 2000**

PRIORITIES

- Establish CAO as the interface to NMED, implementing HQ policy.
- Assist the TRU waste sites in complying with the RCRA permit.
- Ramp up TRU Waste Shipments to 5 per week.
- Strive for efficiencies in waste characterization, certification, transportation and disposal.
- Maintain the WIPP Site in a superior state of safety, health, and operational readiness.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Dr. Inés Triay, Carlsbad Area Office Manager, presented the WIPP 2000 Review and Outlook April 11 to the U. S. House Nuclear Caucus in Washington, DC. The briefing was well attended and questions centered on the permit status and the sites shipping schedule.
- A CAO representative attended the Fourth Annual U.S.-Mexico Border Conference April 5-7 in Washington, DC. The conference was attended by the Mayor of Ciudad Juarez and Congressmen from California and Texas. Secretary Richardson spoke at the conference.
- A CAO representative staffed the WIPP exhibit the week of April 10, 2000 during the EM-50 Science Exhibit in Washington, DC. The exhibit, entitled "Strength Through Science," showcased technologies developed through the Environmental Management Office of Science and Technology (EM-50) that are supporting cleanup of DOE sites. The CAO display featured technologies that benefit the transuranic waste sites.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

- None to report

UPCOMING MEETINGS/REVIEWS/AUDITS

- Public meetings on proposed New Mexico Hazardous Waste Act Permit Class II modifications will be held May 16 in the auditorium of the CAO's Skeen-Whitlock Building in Carlsbad and May 18 at the Hilton of Santa Fe in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Both meetings will consist of two sessions - 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. and 5:30 p.m to 9 p.m. Stakeholders will have an opportunity to learn about the proposed modifications and submit written comments to the New Mexico Environment Department. The comment period ends June 5.

- **New Date:** The 70th WIPP Quarterly Review is tentatively scheduled for May 4, 2000 in Carlsbad. The CAO will host the meeting.

**CARLSBAD AREA OFFICE
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
WEEK ENDING APRIL 7, 2000**



PRIORITIES

- Establish CAO as the interface to NMED, implementing HQ policy.
- Assist the TRU waste sites in complying with the RCRA permit.
- Ramp up TRU Waste Shipments to 5 per week.
- Strive for efficiencies in waste characterization, certification, transportation and disposal.
- Maintain the WIPP Site in a superior state of safety, health, and operational readiness.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- On April 5, 2000, the Carlsbad Area Office (CAO) and Westinghouse Waste Isolation Division (WID) submitted three proposed permit modifications to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). The modifications do not concern issues raised in the DOE's appeal of some provisions of the permit, are consistent with industry standards for handling hazardous materials and do not compromise the safety of the facility, the public, or its employees. DOE-CAO and Westinghouse have requested that NMED modify two requirements of the hazardous waste facility permit that govern waste characterization activities. The third modification proposal is a request to revise the acceptance criteria for two types of hazardous waste. The submittals start a formal review process that includes a 60-day public comment period and two separate public meetings. The public meetings are scheduled for May 16, 2000, in Carlsbad and May 18, 2000, in Santa Fe, New Mexico.
- Major General (USAF - Retired) John McBroom, Director, Office of Emergency Operations, toured the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant facilities on April 5, 2000. The tour included both surface and underground facilities and included briefings on waste handling, emergency management, and emergency response capabilities.
- The fifth shipment of non-mixed TRU waste from Rocky Flats certified under the New Mexico Hazardous Waste Permit arrived safely on April 7, 2000.
- Mining of Panel 2 continues with the initial cut for Room 6 underway. Panel 2 mining is 17% ahead of schedule with a completion date of October 2000.

- A CAO representative gave a WIPP status report April 7, 2000, for the Legislative Roundtable on WIPP Issues at the National Conference of State Legislatures in Santa Fe. Approximately 30 state legislators and staffers toured the WIPP April 6, 2000.
- Several members of the Environmental Evaluation Group (EEG) visited the WIPP site on Thursday, April 6, 2000, to familiarize themselves with the Planned Remote Handled (RH) waste container handling process. This briefing and demonstration will assist the EEG with activities in reviewing the process and associated preliminary safety analysis documentation.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

- None to report

UPCOMING MEETINGS/REVIEWS/AUDITS

- The 70th WIPP Quarterly Review is tentatively scheduled for May 4, 2000, in Carlsbad. The Carlsbad Area Office will host the meeting.
- An Emergency Management Review by the Headquarters Office of Independent Oversight, OA-30, has been scheduled for WIPP for May 1-11, 2000. CAO is working with OA-30 to define expectations and schedules.
- The Carlsbad Area Office will participate in a DOE exhibit event on Capitol Hill the week of April 10, 2000. This exhibit will showcase technologies developed through the Environmental Management Office of Science and Technology (EM-50) that are supporting cleanup of DOE sites. The exhibits, which will support Dr. Carolyn Huntoon and Dr. Gerald Boyd during the congressional budget hearings, will be displayed at the Senate and House office buildings and at DOE Headquarters. The CAO display will feature technologies that benefit the transuranic waste sites.

**CARLSBAD AREA OFFICE
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
WEEK ENDING MARCH 31, 2000**

PRIORITIES

- Establish CAO as the interface to NMED, implementing HQ policy.
- Assist the TRU waste sites in complying with the RCRA permit.
- Ramp up TRU Waste Shipments to 5 per week.
- Strive for efficiencies in waste characterization, certification, transportation and disposal.
- Maintain the WIPP Site in a superior state of safety, health, and operational readiness.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The fourth shipment of non-mixed TRU waste from Rocky Flats certified under the New Mexico Hazardous Waste Permit arrived safely on March 31, 2000.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

- None to report

UPCOMING MEETINGS/REVIEWS/AUDITS

- The 70th WIPP Quarterly Review is tentatively scheduled for May 4, 2000, in Carlsbad. The Carlsbad Area Office will host the meeting.
- An Emergency Management Review by the Headquarters Office of Independent Oversight, OA-30, has been scheduled for WIPP for May 1-11, 2000. CAO is working with OA-30 to define expectations and schedules.
- The Carlsbad Area Office will participate in a DOE exhibit event on Capitol Hill the week of April 10, 2000. This exhibit will showcase technologies developed through the Environmental Management Office of Science and Technology (EM-50) that are supporting cleanup of DOE sites. The exhibits, which will support Dr. Carolyn Huntoon and Dr. Gerald Boyd during the congressional budget hearings, will be displayed at the Senate and House office buildings and at DOE Headquarters. The CAO display will feature technologies that benefit the transuranic waste sites.

**CARLSBAD AREA OFFICE
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
WEEK ENDING MARCH 24, 2000**

PRIORITIES

- Establish CAO as the interface to NMED, implementing HQ policy.
- Assist the TRU waste sites in complying with the RCRA permit.
- Ramp up TRU Waste Shipments to 5 per week.
- Strive for efficiencies in waste characterization, certification, transportation and disposal.
- Maintain the WIPP Site in a superior state of safety, health, and operational readiness.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The U. S. Department of Energy issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on Friday, March 24, 2000, for the management and operation of the WIPP. Proposals are due to the DOE by May 19, 2000.
- The third shipment of non-mixed TRU waste from Rocky Flats certified under the New Mexico Hazardous waste permit arrived safely on Saturday, March 25, 2000.
- Mexico conducted a National Mine Rescue Team competition for its metal and non-metal mining industry. The WIPP mine rescue team assisted the Mine Safety and Health Association (MSHA) and the New Mexico Mine Inspectors' office in conducting the contest.
- Two Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) staff members visited the WIPP facility on March 13-14, 2000, for detailed briefings on the Remote Handled (RH) TRU waste process. They were also provided with an up-to-date WIPP overview, tours of the waste handling building, and an underground tour.
- CAO representatives attended the Western Governors' Association meeting March 22-23 in Albuquerque. Discussions included the Transportation Plan, WIPP Operations Disposal Plan and schedules for the northern extension and southern routes, and communications and outreach program activities.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

- None to report

UPCOMING MEETINGS/REVIEWS/AUDITS

- The 70th WIPP Quarterly Review is tentatively scheduled for May 4, 2000, in Carlsbad. The Carlsbad Area Office will host the meeting.
- An Emergency Management Review by the Headquarters Office of Independent Oversight, OA-30, has been scheduled for WIPP for May 1-11, 2000. CAO is working with OA-30 to define expectations and schedules.
- The Carlsbad Area Office will participate in a DOE exhibit event on Capitol Hill the week of April 10, 2000. This exhibit will showcase technologies developed through the Environmental Management Office of Science and Technology (EM-50) that are supporting cleanup of DOE sites. The exhibits, which will support Dr. Carolyn Huntoon and Dr. Gerald Boyd during the congressional budget hearings, will be displayed at the Senate and House office buildings and at DOE Headquarters. The CAO display will feature technologies that benefit the transuranic waste sites.

**CARLSBAD AREA OFFICE
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
WEEK ENDING MARCH 17, 2000**

PRIORITIES

- Establish CAO as the interface to NMED, implementing HQ policy.
- Assist the TRU waste sites in complying with the RCRA permit.
- Ramp up TRU Waste Shipments to 5 per week.
- Strive for efficiencies in waste characterization, certification, transportation and disposal.
- Maintain the WIPP Site in a superior state of safety, health, and operational readiness.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- In a letter dated March 9, 2000, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) approved the Rocky Flats characterization program for retrievable stored CH-TRU debris waste. This represents the first waste stream within the DOE TRU waste complex approved under the conditions contained in the WIPP Hazardous Waste Permit. The next sites scheduled for approval are Hanford, in May of 2000, followed by Idaho in June 2000.
- Following the approval of the Rocky Flats waste stream by NMED, the Carlsbad Area Office resumed waste shipments by authorizing a shipment of non-mixed TRU waste from Rocky Flats on Friday, March 10, 2000. Rocky Flats is scheduled to make two shipments per week starting the last week of March.
- Nicholas Bakas, New Mexico Secretary of Public Safety, and several staff members toured the WIPP March 15. The visit also included a meeting with CAO Manager Dr. Inés Triay and a CAO/WIPP briefing.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

- None to report

UPCOMING MEETINGS/REVIEWS/AUDITS

- The 70th WIPP Quarterly Review is tentatively scheduled for April 27, 2000, in Carlsbad. The Carlsbad Area Office will host the meeting.
- An Emergency Management Review by the Headquarters Office of Independent Oversight, OA-30, has been scheduled for WIPP for May 1-11, 2000. CAO is working with OA-30 to define expectations and schedules.
- The Carlsbad Area Office will participate in a DOE exhibit event on Capitol Hill the week of April 10, 2000. This exhibit will showcase technologies developed through the Environmental Management Office of Science and Technology (EM-50) that are supporting cleanup of DOE sites. The exhibits, which will support Dr. Carolyn Huntoon and Dr. Gerald Boyd during the congressional budget hearings, will be displayed at the Senate and House office buildings and at DOE Headquarters. The CAO display will feature technologies that benefit the transuranic waste sites.

**CARLSBAD AREA OFFICE
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 4, 2000**

PRIORITIES

- Establish CAO as the interface to NMED, implementing HQ policy.
- Assist the TRU waste sites in complying with the RCRA permit.
- Ramp up TRU Waste Shipments to 5 per week.
- Strive for efficiencies in waste characterization, certification, transportation and disposal.
- Maintain the WIPP Site in a superior state of safety, health, and operational readiness.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Carlsbad Area Office has updated and improved its WIPP Home Page. Sections include pages on News, Information, Transportation, Opportunities, Contracts, and a section on "What's New". Information is available on news releases, tour information, WIPP site photographs, hazardous waste permit related documents, and a large list of technical documents related to WIPP operations. There is a section related to Transportation issues, such as Driver Training, Shipping Containers, and maps that show the required route through each State. In the "What's New" section, information on the CAO events calendar, Quality Assurance documents, and WIPP business opportunities is available. The new Home Page can be accessed at www.wipp.carlsbad.nm.us.
- Recent briefings on CAO and WIPP activities included a presentation to the Alabama Emergency Management Council, the Fruitland, Idaho Chamber of Commerce, and the City Manager of Caldwell, Idaho.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

- None to report

UPCOMING MEETINGS/REVIEWS/AUDITS

- The 70th WIPP Quarterly Review is tentatively scheduled for April 27, 2000, in Carlsbad. The CAO will host the meeting.
- An Emergency Management Review by the Headquarters Office of Independent Oversight, OA-30, has been scheduled for WIPP for April 10-21, 2000. CAO is working with OA-30 to define expectations and schedules.

- The Office of Inspector General (OIG), Albuquerque Audit Group, visited the WIPP on January 25-28, 2000, for an "Assessment of Changes to the Internal Controls and Review of Internal Audit at WIPP-Westinghouse (aka VANEA)." The objectives of the assessment were to determine (1) if internal controls are adequate to assure that costs claimed by Westinghouse are allowable under the DOE contract and (2) the extent to which the OIG may rely upon Westinghouse's internal audit work. The OIG will return the week of February 7, 2000, for a close-out meeting.
- A meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2000, in Carlsbad at the Skeen-Whitlock Building to address the Environmental Evaluation Group's (EEG) concerns on WIPP radiation air effluent sampling and monitoring. The CAO's objective is to resolve the EEG's issues with WIPP radiation air effluent sampling and monitoring.

**CARLSBAD AREA OFFICE
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
WEEK ENDING JANUARY 28, 2000**

PRIORITIES

- Establish CAO as the interface to NMED, implementing HQ policy.
- Assist the TRU waste sites in complying with the RCRA permit.
- Ramp up TRU Waste Shipments to 5 per week.
- Strive for efficiencies in waste characterization, certification, transportation and disposal.
- Maintain the WIPP Site in a superior state of safety, health, and operational readiness.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- WIPP achieved a new milestone for the Site Computerized History and Maintenance Planning System (CHAMPS) by inclusion of the Site Component Indices Register into the CHAMPS Equipment Module. This comprehensive enhancement, encompassing more than 26,000 equipment and system records, will provide engineers, planners, and management with accurate and instantaneous information to support configuration management, planning, trending, and history.
- Carlsbad Area Office (CAO) Manager, Dr. Inés Triay, presented the annual CAO/WIPP update briefing to the New Mexico State Legislature in Santa Fe, New Mexico, on January 27, 2000. Attendance also included several State Cabinet officers and other State officials. The breakfast meeting was well attended and the briefing was well received.
- The mining of Panel 2 is progressing on schedule with the initial mining cut completed for Room 1, and has advanced to the Room 2 intersections.
- The Environmental Evaluation Group (EEG) staff visited the WIPP on January 26, 2000, to inspect the effluent sampling/monitoring system for the underground ventilation exhaust air. The EEG staff discussed issues involved with the monitoring system with CAO and Westinghouse staff the following day.
- CAO, Westinghouse, EEG, and the Carlsbad Environmental Monitoring and Research Center (CEMRC) initiated, on January 24, 2000, an improved process to share the data from Skid A-3 for sampling the exhaust ventilation of the WIPP underground. The process involves sharing resources to ensure that the sampling system is operated effectively and the data obtained is of the highest quality practicable.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

- None to report

UPCOMING MEETINGS/REVIEWS/AUDITS

- The 70th WIPP Quarterly Review is tentatively scheduled for April 27, 2000, in Carlsbad. The CAO will host the meeting.
- An Emergency Management Review by the Headquarters Office of Independent Oversight, OA-30, has been scheduled for WIPP for April 10-21, 2000. CAO is working with OA-30 to define expectations and schedules.

**CARLSBAD AREA OFFICE
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
WEEK ENDING JANUARY 21, 2000**

PRIORITIES

- Establish CAO as the interface to NMED, implementing HQ policy.
- Assist the TRU waste sites in complying with the RCRA permit.
- Ramp up TRU Waste Shipments to 5 per week.
- Strive for efficiencies in waste characterization, certification, transportation and disposal.
- Maintain the WIPP Site in a superior state of safety, health, and operational readiness.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The mining of Panel 2 is progressing on schedule with the initial mining cut completed for Room 1. The entire mining project is approximately 30% complete.
- The 69th WIPP Quarterly Review, hosted by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED), was held January 18, 2000, in Santa Fe. In addition to participants from the Carlsbad Area Office (CAO), Environmental Evaluation Group (EEG), New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department, NMED; and New Mexico Attorney General's office, three members of Citizens Against Radioactive Dumping (CARD) attended the meeting.
- The Carlsbad Area Office attended the first meeting of the Training Subteam of the DOE Albuquerque Partnership Council (APC). The Subteam will be addressing partnering efforts of DOE-AL and its contractor to meet the performance objectives of the DOE HQ Corporate Education, Training, and Development Business Plan.
- The DOEnet connection successfully replaced the DOE Business Network (DOEBN) connection on Thursday, January 20, 2000. This upgrade will enable the WWIS to continue its function from all waste sites, but will have better speed, allowing quicker program execution. This upgrade can accommodate the new TRANSCOM software.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

- None to report

UPCOMING MEETINGS/REVIEWS/AUDITS

- The Carlsbad Area Office will conduct a certification audit on the DOE Hanford Reservation TRU waste characterization process the week of January 24, 2000.
- The annual New Mexico Legislative Briefing will be held January 27, 2000, in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Carlsbad Area Office Manager, Dr. Inés Triay, will give a status report on current and projected activities at CAO.

**CARLSBAD AREA OFFICE
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
WEEK ENDING JANUARY 7, 2000**

PRIORITIES

- Establish CAO as the interface to NMED, implementing HQ policy.
- Assist the TRU waste sites in complying with the RCRA permit.
- Ramp up TRU Waste Shipments to 5 per week.
- Strive for efficiencies in waste characterization, certification, transportation and disposal.
- Maintain the WIPP Site in a superior state of safety, health, and operational readiness.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The planned FY 2001 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) budget for the Carlsbad Area Office (CAO) came in at \$194.5M. This amount represents new budget authority for FY 2001 and should be very close to what will be released in the President's budget which is due out in February 2000.
- Headquarters Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducted its annual audit of the Carlsbad Area Office's (CAO) Quality Assurance program January 4-6, 2000. EPA concluded that CAO has an adequate, implemented and effective Quality Assurance program. Of the findings identified, most were corrected during the audit, or a Corrective Action Plan was developed. None of the findings require additional information.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

- None to report

UPCOMING MEETINGS/REVIEWS/AUDITS

- A full-scale WIPPTREX exercise is scheduled for January 12 in Midland, Texas.
- The annual New Mexico Legislative Briefing will be held January 27, 2000, in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Carlsbad Area Office Manager Dr. Inés Triay will give a status report on recent activities at the WIPP.
- The 69th WIPP Quarterly, previously scheduled for January 27, has been rescheduled for Tuesday, January 18. It will be held at the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Division offices on Pacheco Street in Santa Fe.