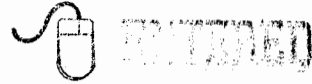




The Secretary of Energy  
Washington, DC 20585  
March 24, 2004



The Honorable Bill Richardson  
Governor of New Mexico  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Dear Governor Richardson:

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

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

Sincerely,

*Spencer Abraham*  
Spencer Abraham

Enclosure — on Bookshelf and CD

- cc: The Honorable Mike Leavitt, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency
- Senator Jeff Bingaman
- Senator Pete V. Domenici
- Congresswoman Heather Wilson
- Congressman Steve Pearce
- Congressman Tom Udall



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