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ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

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ENTERED



RON CURRY
SECRETARY

DERRITH WATCHMAN-MOORE
DEPUTY SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Felix Carrasco
Carlsbad Field Office

FROM: James P. Bearzi, Chief *JBZ*
Hazardous Waste Bureau

SUBJECT: WIPP INSPECTIONS DURING THE WEEKEND OF MAY 22, 2004

DATE: May 24, 2004

As you know, the WIPP facility in Eddy County, New Mexico, experienced an operational malfunction on Thursday, May 20, 2004, that prevented waste from being emplaced in the repository for several days. You were asked to conduct periodic inspections of the facility during the suspension of waste emplacement over the subsequent few days.

Although the Environment Department's response to this incident occurred at many levels, your inspections at the facility conducted with the utmost of professionalism created a strong NMED presence and forcefully conveyed the Secretary's commitment to firm regulation of the WIPP facility. Your "stepping up to plate" demonstrated how the many organizational units of the Department can work seamlessly to achieve a common end.

On behalf of the Secretary and the Hazardous Waste Bureau, I thank you for a job well done.

- cc: Ron Curry, Cabinet Secretary, Environment Department
Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, Environment Department
Charles Lundstrom, Director, Water & Waste Management Division
Ana Marie Ortiz, Director, Field Operations Division
Carlos Romero, Manager, District IV
Steve Zappe, Hazardous Waste Bureau

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