



Department of Energy
Carlsbad Field Office
P.O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, NM 88221
December 7, 2004

Mr. Bill Mackie
Program Manager
Western Governors' Association
1515 Cleveland Place, Suite 200
Denver, CO 80202

Subject: Semi-Annual Notification Letter (Early Issuance)

Dear Mr. Mackie:

Enclosed is an early issuance of the projected transuranic (TRU) waste shipment schedule to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) covering the one-year period of January 2005 through December 2005. This letter is being issued one month earlier than expected (January 2005) in order to satisfy an additional request from Western Governors' Association (WGA) to provide a schedule, by December 31, 2004, of shipments from Nevada Test Site (NTS) to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) using California routes in calendar year 2005. This schedule updates and extends the data previously sent July 2004 and is provided in accordance with Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) agreements with the Western Governors' Association (WGA), the Southern States Energy Board (SSEB), the State of New Mexico, and commitments to tribal governments. This schedule is subject to change due to resource availability and changing priorities.

Shipments are projected to continue from the following sites that are currently certified; Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (RFETS) (CO), Savannah River Site (SRS) (SC), Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) (ID), Hanford Site (WA), Nevada Test Site (NTS) (NV), and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) (CA). Shipments of all TRU waste from RFETS are scheduled to be completed by the end of April 2005. Shipments of legacy TRU drums from NTS that are authorized to be shipped to WIPP are projected to be completed by the end of December 2005. Shipments of the certified drums at LLNL are scheduled to be completed in January 2005. In addition, shipments from Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) (NM) are projected to begin March 2005 and shipments from a new waste characterization project for retrieved waste at INEEL are projected to begin late summer or fall 2005. The shipment schedules and number of shipments from LANL and the new project at INEEL are tentative and subject to DOE authorization of site operations readiness and/or waste certification approval, as necessary. In this one-year period of January 2005 through December 2005, total shipments to WIPP are projected to range from about 23 to 33 shipments per week.



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In addition to a proposed schedule for NTS shipments in calendar year 2005, WGA also requested an explanation of "the technical difficulties at NTS leading to DOE's inability to meet the original deadline [of December 31, 2004], and how DOE is overcoming these difficulties." There were five developments that occurred during the setup and characterization efforts at NTS that led to schedule slippages. First, the Department planned to return the characterization equipment to the NTS in early January 2004. Unfortunately, the mobile characterization systems were still needed at the Hanford site and did not arrive at NTS until February and March 2004. Second, the planned Readiness Assessment required prior to the characterization equipment resuming operations at the NTS took longer than originally scheduled. Third, issues regarding the calibration and maintenance of the head space gas system surfaced during the startup of operations and resulted in approximately three weeks of delay. Fourth, there were significant delays in reconciling drum numbers with drum content information, effectively delaying waste shipments during October 2004. Finally, the Department decided to characterize additional drums (approximately 400 drums) in the legacy drum inventory not originally part of the schedule to be characterized during this shipping campaign. The characterization of these additional drums will require the mobile characterization equipment to remain at the NTS until April 2005, also extending the schedule of NTS drum shipments past December 2004.

The first four developments at the NTS described above have been resolved and the fifth development is the current schedule. The schedule for completing characterization of the original available drum inventory at the NTS will be completed in December 2004 and the shipments of those drums are expected to be completed by the end of February 2005. The shipments of the additional drums at the NTS will occur after February 2005 but before the end of December 2005.

A specific monthly schedule for shipping the remaining drums that are authorized to be shipped to WIPP from NTS cannot be finalized until all of the additional drum content information has been evaluated; however, the total number of shipments from NTS during calendar year 2005 is projected on the enclosure.

Shipments projected for all sites are contingent upon each site that is shipping to WIPP to maintain certification and audit approval from CBFO, New Mexico Environment Department and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Current shipping information is:

Proper Shipping Name -	Radioactive Material, Type B(U) package, fissile, UN3328, or Radioactive Material, Type B(U) package non-fissile or fissile excepted, UN2916
Radionuclides -	Pu-238, Pu-239, Pu-240, Pu-241, and Am-241

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Throughout the year, CBFO will continue to provide an eight-week rolling schedule, updated as necessary, as our official shipment notification. Shipment-specific information, including the point of origin, departure date and time, scheduled arrival date and time, radionuclides, activity, proper shipping name(s), and the number of shipping packages will be made available as soon as the information is known. The eight-week rolling schedule is currently sent by electronic mail and posted on the TRANSCOM system. As a reminder, the eight-week rolling schedule contains sensitive information pertaining to the TRU waste shipments and should be protected as such for security reasons.

The next issuance of the Semi-Annual Notification Letter will occur by the end of July 2005. If you need additional information or questions arise, please contact Mr. Casey Gadbury, TRU Waste Logistics Work Coordinator at (505) 234-7372.

Sincerely,



Lloyd Piper
Acting Manager

Enclosure

TRU Waste Shipments (January 2005 through December 2005)

Site	Total Projected Shipments
RFETS	255
Hanford	159
INEEL¹	709
LANL²	41
SRS	176
NTS	20
LLNL	6
Total	1366

- 1 Subject to certification of waste characterization processes at the new waste retrieval project at INEEL
- 2 Subject to authorization of LANL site operations readiness