



My name is Kyle Marksteiner, and I've been a resident of Carlsbad, New Mexico for the past 14 years. We've got a little garden at my house that I think helps me best visualize these proposed modifications. We first planted the garden three years ago, and we did so with a number of considerations- keeping my little daughter out of it, keeping the bad bugs out and the good worms in, maximizing sun and shade and water and so forth.

Every year, we evaluate our garden and make some changes. We make tweaks based on the knowledge we've gained from past experiences and our understanding of upcoming situations. That's how I see this permit modification- making tweaks to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant's operations that are based on past experiences and understanding.

Of the three issues, I feel the most strongly about the panel reconfiguration issue. I know a lot of people who work in the WIPP underground. A guy by the name of Anthony lives a few blocks down and is famous for holding the town's best National Night Out party every year. Carlsbad is a mining community, so I also know a lot of people who work in the mining industry outside of WIPP. And it just makes more sense to add two more panels than it does to try to widen the main access drifts, which are decades old. WIPP knows how to build new panels using "just in time" mining, and WIPP knows how to do it safely and in the best interests of my neighbor Anthony and other underground workers. This change is very important.

The next issue is the panel closure redesign, and I'd like to approach that one with my taxpayer hat on. If spending millions of dollars on concrete plugs and walls is what is needed for employee safety, then I'm all for it, but from reading the material, I think the evidence is crystal clear that these expensive items are not needed, or even useful. A thick layer of salt will protect the workers, in the same way that a thick layer of salt protects the workers right now. In fact, the act of closing the panels under the original design probably presents the largest safety hazard, in terms of engineering difficulty. Let's be smart about our safety efforts and put natural barriers to good use.

Finally, there is the VOC issue. Confession time, this topic was the most difficult for me to understand. While I felt the other two primary permit issues were no brainers, I had to read over this one multiple times to make sure I understood it.

What finally convinced me that it was ok was an explanation of the "target compound list." Apparently, just because something is not on the target compound list does not mean that WIPP would not be able to monitor it. In fact, this permit modification will make it much easier to add other compounds to the target list, should they become significant in the future. WIPP's moving to a better compound list and developing a formula that actually focuses on worker safety.



In response to this permit modification request, there have been some slippery slope arguments made that are not relevant. If I buy a new shovel, I'm buying a new shovel to help me with my current garden. It would be absurd for my neighbor to be upset that I got a new shovel because someday I might use it to plant a tree that will drop pecans all over his yard. Let's not make policy based on speculation.

I believe these proposed modifications are reasonable and significantly improve the efficiency and safety of WIPP. Let's build on past experiences and improve the garden. Thank you.

