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WIPP UPDATE: March 16, 2014

The public has asked a number of questions at recent Town Hall meetings. In an effort to share this information, we have provided some of the questions and corresponding answers. More will follow.

3-13-14 Carlsbad Town Hall meeting co-hosted by Mayor Dale Janway and DOE

- Q. Is the PowerPoint presentation on the Fire Accident Investigation that was used at the Town Hall meeting available?**
- A.** It is posted on the WIPP Recovery web site at www.wipp.energy.gov
- Q. When will the accident investigation report be available to the public?**
- A.** The Accident Investigation Board Report is posted to www.wipp.energy.gov
- Q. Is it safe to eat deer harvested from around the WIPP area? Is it safe for children to eat them?**
- A.** Yes. The small release of radioactive particles from WIPP on Feb. 14 is consistent with background radiation levels and well below safety limits established by the Environmental Protection Agency. Background radiation is constantly present in the environment and is emitted from a variety of natural and artificial sources.
- Q. I want to know if Carlsbad or surrounding cities would have notice in the event this happens again? Are there warning signs in Carlsbad?**
- A.** WIPP has ongoing cooperative agreements with emergency management and emergency services in Eddy and Lea counties. Those agencies are notified when there is an emergency at WIPP. Depending on the nature of the emergency, the official response agency would determine if public protective actions were needed, such as road closure to WIPP. It is important to note that WIPP is centered on 16 sections (16 square miles) in a remote area 26 miles southeast of Carlsbad.

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Q. What exactly was released . . . radiation or particles plus radiation?

A. Radioactive particles were released. The particles emit radiation. During the release event, the air filtration system at WIPP worked as designed, capturing more than 99 percent of radioactive particles. The small amount of material that was released is not a threat to human health or the environment.