



U.S. Department of Energy  
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Waste Isolation Pilot Plant  
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## WIPP UPDATE: March 29, 2014

### Seven activities to recovery and re-entry

NWP has developed and implemented a recovery plan that incorporates seven activities necessary to keep the public, environment, and employees safe, mitigate the radiation source, and restore operations. The seven activities include:

- **Activity 1 – Isolate ventilation flow-through:** Two 10-foot wide bypass dampers, that could allow limited airflow to bypass HEPA filters, were sealed with high density foam.  
**Status: Complete**
- **Activity 2 - Lower unmanned monitoring instruments in the salt and air intake shafts:** Data from the monitors showed no radiation in the area of the shafts underground and established safe habitability for manned entries.  
**Status: Complete**
- **Activity 3 - Manned re-entry team descends into the mine:** The initial manned entry consists of a team of eight people. The team will survey conditions from the salt shaft station to the air intake shaft station to establish two usable egress locations— a requirement for future underground work. The team will confirm communications (mine pager phone and regular telephone) with the above ground base station. Last, the team will establish an underground base of operations and establish a clean area for team members to change into or remove protective suits and equipment as they enter and leave the mine.  
**Status: Targeted for next week (March 30- April 5)**
- **Activity 4 - Second manned re-entry team enters the mine:** The team will continue to survey conditions of the mine while moving southward toward the suspected release location. As conditions

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allow, the team will expand the clean base of operations to allow team members to progress and work their way to the suspected release location (Room 7 of Panel 7). Plans will be refined to isolate and mitigate the source of the release.

**Status: Will follow a few days after initial entry**

- **Activity 5 - Replace contaminated filters:** For operations to continue, a proper functioning ventilation system is required. Part of this operation is to replace the high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters and filter banks.

**Status: New filters should arrive next week (March 30-April 5)**

- **Activity 6 - Mitigate the contamination source:** knowledge acquired from manned entries will lead to the development of a plan that will be used to refine plans that will mitigate the contamination hazard in the underground.

**Status: Will commence when information is known about the source and location of the release**

- **Activity 7 - Incorporate corrective actions:** Lessons learned from the fire and radiological event are being used to enhance the programs and procedures prior to the resumption of normal operations.

**Status: In progress throughout the recovery process.**

### **Community Meetings Scheduled**

**APRIL 3** – Carlsbad Mayor Dale Janway and DOE will co-host a Town Hall meeting featuring updates on WIPP recovery activities and recent environmental monitoring results.

The town hall meetings are held at 5:30 p.m. every Thursday at the Carlsbad City Council Chambers, 101 N. Halagueno Street. The meeting will also be streamed live at <http://new.livestream.com/rrv/>.

**APRIL 14** – WIPP update to the Jal City Council at 5:30 p.m. Location: 309 S. Main St.