

# WIPP: All workers needed in recovery

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A southeast New Mexico nuclear waste repository says it plans to employ current workers in the recovery from a radiation leak.

The Department of Energy has approved a plan submitted by the contractor in charge of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant to retrain existing workers in response to changed conditions underground, or future changes to operating procedures.

Two incidents in February shuttered the plant, a truck fire in an underground mine and a radiation leak from one of the underground storage panels. Officials say the incidents are unrelated.

Under its plan, Nuclear Waste Partnership said all workers currently assigned to WIPP — there are about 1,000 — will be tapped for the recovery effort.

“The Department understands the value of utilizing the experience and expertise of the NWP workforce in all aspects for recovering from the recent fire and radiation release incidents,” said Joe Franco, manager of DOE’s Carlsbad Field Office.

The Field Office has announced it will hold weekly public meetings to provide updates on the recovery effort. The meetings are scheduled for 5:30 p.m. each Thursday in the council chambers of City Hall, 101 N. Halagueno St., in Carlsbad.

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