



U.S. Department of Energy
Carlsbad Field Office
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant
P.O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221

Media Contact:

Brad Bugger
WIPP Recovery Communications
(575) 234-7545

www.wipp.energy.gov

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WIPP UPDATE: May 20, 2014

WIPP continues investigation of disrupted waste disposal room

WIPP re-entry teams are using different techniques to examine conditions in Panel 7, Room 7, where disruptions to magnesium oxide bags and waste containers damaged by a yet unknown event have previously been identified. Their goal is to obtain the best information, while protecting worker safety and minimizing disruption to the affected area.

On Monday, a rope camera, which is typically used inside pipes to see small limited areas, was delivered to the area through a titanium tube. The technique allowed operators to lower the camera between the stacks and rotate, as needed, but its low resolution means the images are not as clear as previous ones taken. At right, a slip sheet damaged by heat is shown on top of a 55-gallon drum.



An entry planned for later this week may also collect samples from the area for laboratory analysis.

Work on ventilation system progressing

Construction of containment tents is ongoing, as WIPP prepares to replace several filters in the underground ventilation system. HEPA, or high efficiency particulate air, filters continue to function well and will remain in place for now. The filters to be changed are those that remove the larger particles and, in addition to having contamination, are believed to be affected by soot and smoke from the February 5 underground vehicle fire.

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Community Meetings Scheduled

- May 22: The City of Carlsbad and DOE will co-host its weekly Town Hall meeting featuring updates on WIPP recovery activities. The meeting is scheduled at 5:30 p.m. at the Carlsbad City Council Chambers, 101 N. Halagueno Street. Live streaming of the weekly meetings can be seen at <http://new.livestream.com/rvv/>.