

Allen, Pam, NMENV

From: Kliphuis, Trais, NMENV
Sent: Saturday, July 26, 2014 12:36 PM
To: Flynn, Ryan, NMENV; Kendall, Jeff, NMENV
Cc: Winchester, Jim, NMENV; Tongate, Butch, NMENV; Schwender, Erika, NMENV; Blaine, Tom, NMENV; Skibitski, Thomas, NMENV; Kieling, John, NMENV; Holmes, Steve, NMENV; LucasKamat, Susan, NMENV; Turner, Jill, NMENV; Nelson, Morgan, NMENV; Ines Triay; Smith, Coleman, NMENV; Simon, Martin, NMENV; Cobrain, Dave, NMENV; Pullen, Steve, NMENV; Briley, Siona, NMENV; Hall, Timothy, NMENV; Allen, Pam, NMENV
Subject: FW: WIPP status

WIPP Status

From: Basabilvazo, George - DOE [mailto:George.Basabilvazo@wipp.ws]
Sent: Friday, July 25, 2014 7:30 PM
To: Kliphuis, Trais, NMENV
Subject: status

Trais,

Today (7/25) an entry to the underground was made to reset the controller multiplier card for LPU 807/Regulator 308 (this LPU provides communications back to the surface at the Central Monitoring Room) and to reset a 480 volt breaker. The entry was successful and communications with Regulator 308 have been restored. Restoring the communication with regulator 308 allows the electrical outage work to clean the electrical panels in the waste hoist tower to be initiated. Cleaning of the waste hoist tower electrical panels is the last major waste hoist cleaning effort which will now allow us to begin to focus on the work activities (e.g., preventative maintenance actions, preoperational checks, etc) to begin to return the waste hoist to normal operation. Please note that putting the waste hoist back into normal operations may require several weeks, however, we continue to make good safe progress and keep you apprised of the progress. The electrical outage is being performed this evening and tonight so that the cleaning of the waste hoist tower electrical panels can be conducted tonight.

Just a heads up on another item that you may hear about is that the borehole extensometer data in panel 6 room 4 shows that the rate of displacement (separation between the salt roof beam and an anhydrite/clay seam) is increasing, which indicates that there may be a roof beam detachment ("roof fall") in room 4 in the next month or so. What this means is that a portion of the salt roof beam may detach and come into contact with the waste array (MgO bags on top of the waste columns). If the roof beam detaches and comes down on the waste array the MgO bags will likely break as designed and disperse around the waste columns as designed. Some of the containers may be compromised. However there is chain link, brattice cloth and steel bulkheads on each side of the room between room 4 and 3, between room 3 and 2, and between room 2 and 1; three ventilation barriers on each side. In addition, in S-2750 (what was the air intake side of panel 6) has chain link, brattice cloth and run-of-mine salt installed, and in S-3080 (what was the exhaust side of panel 6) has the chain link and brattice cloth are hanging down to the floor. Therefore we do not anticipate any impact outside of room 4, panel 6. To the best of my knowledge we do not see any acceleration of the roof beam in the other rooms.



- The purpose of the ventilations barricades (chain link and brattice cloth) is to isolate the filled disposal room from the underground ventilation such that a motive force is minimized that could transport material from within the filled room to the outside the filled room. A roof beam detachment in a panel is an event that has been modeled. If you recall the ventilation rate for an active disposal room is based on protecting an underground worker in a scenario where there could be “roof fall” in the adjacent closed room (chain link and brattice cloth) and you could get a maximum (conservative) amount of VOCs out of the adjacent closed room and into the ventilation air stream in the active room. Room 4 of Panel 6 has multiple ventilation barriers on each side of the room and barriers between rooms. The bottom line is that we do not anticipate that areas outside of room 4, panel 6 will be impacted.

- I know you probably know this but in a panel there are 7 disposal rooms and we install a borehole extensometer at the center of each disposal room to monitor the rate of displacement (separation) between geologic layers in the back (the salt roof beam and anhydrite/clay bed). There are also two extensometers in the S-2750 drift and the S-3080 drift of panel 6. The Salado geology is called “pancake geology” (see figure below from the permit which illustrates this layering) because of the thicker layers of salt are separated by thinner layers (beds) of anhydrites and/or clay seams. In Panel 6 room 4 the borehole extensometer data indicates that the roof beam separation is occurring about 7 feet above the roof. If there is a roof beam detachment in panel 6, room 4 we do not anticipate it will impact the areas outside of room 4, panel 6. The experience from roof fall tests in SPDV rooms (northern part of the underground) conducted before operations (late 80’s early 90’s) where the roof was not bolted and allowed to fall to provide data for the engineers and scientist to refine salt creep models and predictive capability indicate that the roof falls were limited to a room and did not involve the drifts or adjacent rooms.

I probably provided too much information on this topic but wanted to provide some background information because we have not discussed this topic very much and I want to provide a perspective that we understand this and have evaluated this event and that we do not anticipate this being an impact outside of room 4. I also want to emphasize that we will continue to work safely (but with urgency) to complete the closure of panel 6. Please contact me if you have questions.

Best regards,

George T. Basabilvazo

Director, Office of Environment, Safety & Health

DOE/Carlsbad Field Office

P.O. Box 3090

Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221

Ph: (575) 234-7488

Cell: (575) 706-0083