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Department of Energy
Carlsbad Field Office
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NMED
Hazardous Waste Bureau

Mr. John E. Kieling, Bureau Chief
Hazardous Waste Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1
Santa Fe, NM 87508-6303

Mr. Tom Blaine, Division Director
Environmental Health Division
Harold Runnels Building
1190 Saint Francis Drive, Room 4050
Santa Fe, NM 87502-5469

Subject: WIPP Nitrate Salt Bearing Waste Container Isolation Plan Implementation Update,
November 4, 2014

Dear Mr. Kieling and Mr. Blaine:

The purpose of this letter is to provide the New Mexico Environment Department the WIPP Nitrate Salt Bearing Waste Container Isolation Plan Implementation Update, November 4, 2014. This update will be posted to the WIPP Information Repository within five working days.

We certify under penalty of law that this document and all attachments were prepared under our direction or supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on our inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of our knowledge and belief, true, accurate, and complete. We are aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for knowing violations.

Please address any questions you may have regarding the WIPP Nitrate Salt Bearing Waste Container Isolation Plan Implementation Update, November 4, 2014, to Mr. George T. Basabilvazo at (575) 234-7488.

Sincerely,


Jose R. Franco, Manager
Carlsbad Field Office


Robert L. McQuinn, Project Manager
Nuclear Waste Partnership LLC

Enclosure

cc: w/enclosure
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*ED denotes electronic distribution



WIPP Nitrate Salt Bearing Waste Container Isolation Plan Implementation Update

November 4, 2014

Panel 6 Initial Closure

Access to Panel 6

a. Rollback

- Contamination Assessment— Radiological contamination assessments of the underground are ongoing.
- Fixing/Decontamination Activities—Not started.
- Underground Entries—Preventive maintenance activities are underway on various pieces of heavy equipment in the underground. Recent entries have also focused on returning some safety equipment (e.g. fire extinguishers and eye-wash stations) in the rolled back areas into service. Several fire extinguishers in the underground have been inspected and/or replaced. This effort is ongoing. The underground maintenance shop and lunchroom have been released for use by employees working in the underground. Entries this week are underway. Geotechnical surveys performed during the past week included suspected contaminated areas in the south end of the mine and exhaust drift (E-300). The surveys covered the main drifts (E-140/W-30/W-170) from S-3080 to S-3650 and E-300 from S-2180 to S-3650. At the intersection of E-300/S-2180 approximately 600 dpm/100 cm² alpha and approximately 60 dpm/100 cm² removable was detected. Other areas that were surveyed were below 100 dpm/100 cm² alpha. No unexpected ground control conditions were observed.

b. Ground Control Status

- Shaft/Hoist—Preventive maintenance and preoperational checks continue in support of placing the Waste Hoist back in service. The Waste Hoist has been placed in service for conveyance of equipment. Once final inspections are complete, the waste hoist conveyance will be brought into full service. The Waste Shaft sump at the bottom of the shaft is the lowest point of the mine and therefore collects water from areas of the mine such as the Exhaust Shaft. Accumulated water is being removed to uncover the headrope/tailrope guide weights. Once this activity is complete then final inspections can be performed.

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- Bolting—Priorities continue to include resumption of bolting and the initial closure of Panel 6. Bolting will need to be initiated in the Panel 6 entries in preparation to support Panel 6 initial closure activities. Efforts continue on performing preventive maintenance and cleaning equipment needed to support bolting activities. Preventive maintenance on the forklift and lube truck has been completed. This equipment is operational. The bolting machine has been cleaned and the fire protection engineer cleanliness inspection performed. Preventive maintenance on the bolting machine is in progress. This equipment is required for bolting operations.

c. Habitability

- Mine Phones—Initial inspections have been performed for the area between the Air Intake Shaft and Salt Shaft Station. Radiological rollback has allowed access to some mine phones and public address system locations in this limited area. As a result, operability tests have been performed for these underground mine phones and public address system locations. As radiological rollback continues towards Panel 6, mine phones in the Panel 6 area will be checked and, if necessary, will be repaired and have batteries replaced. Self-contained self-rescuer caches will be restocked, if needed, in the drifts (e.g., W-30, S-2750) to Panel 6. Habitability activities have started near the shaft areas and are progressing towards the south end of the underground via drifts (E-140, W-30 and W-170) and will continue towards drifts (S-2750 and S-3080) that provide access to Panel 6 to support Panel 6 initial closure activities.
- Other Activities—None to report for this reporting period.

d. Drills, Training, Mockups

- An underground evacuation drill was performed on October 29th.

Equipment/Ventilation/Materials

a. Electrical

- Ongoing visual checks are being performed to evaluate the extent of soot accumulation on electrical equipment and to clean, if necessary. Electrical distribution panels were cleaned and power restored for lights and some receptacles in the north maintenance shop. Power is now back on to Underground Services Offices at S-550 and to the Conex at the Salt Shaft Station.

b. Ventilation

- Air Flow—The underground ventilation system is currently operating in filtration mode using one 860 fan that supplies a nominal flow rate of 60,000 standard cubic

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feet per minute to the underground. The 860A fan was placed in service on October 21st to perform balancing, which has been completed.

- Roof Bolting—The number of pieces of diesel equipment that can be operated for roof bolting will be limited by the available ventilation in the work area and the minimum ventilation flow rate assigned to each piece of equipment based on Mine Safety and Health Administration air quality requirements. Due to limited ventilation airflow, ventilation adjustments will have to be made as a prerequisite in each location where bolting equipment will operate to ensure equipment airflow requirements are met.

c. Stage Needed Materials in Underground

- Bulkheads for the initial closure of Panel 6 are fabricated and are located in the underground. No additional staging of materials is currently underway.

Document Preparation

a. Work Planning

- Revisions to work planning documents to address Panel 6 initial closure activities are in progress.

b. Safety Basis Documents

- Safety basis documents that support safety basis authorizations for Panel 6 initial closure activities are undergoing review.

Summary - Information Requests/Status

None to date.