Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Recovery Update

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Northern New Mexico Citizen’s Advisory Board
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Recap of the Incidents at WIPP

February 5th Truck Fire:

- All operations at the repository ceased following salt haul truck fire in the WIPP underground.
- An investigation team was deployed to determine the cause of the fire.
  - Report released March 13th.

February 14th Radiological Incident:

- A continuous air monitor detected airborne radiation in the underground.
- WIPP’s ventilation system automatically switched to high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtration mode when airborne radiation was detected.
- underground and the WIPP mine remains in filtration mode at this time.
- Extensive sampling and monitoring conducted by DOE, New Mexico, and Carlsbad Environmental Monitoring Research Center Monitoring.
  - EPA and the NMED also performed sampling.
- Efforts by the DOE and Nuclear Waste Partnership are ensuring workers are fully protected during recovery and restart.
- Town hall meetings are utilized to keep the community informed; to stay apprised go to: http://www.wipp.energy.gov
  - Live streaming of the meetings can be viewed at: http://new.livestream.com/rrv/
February 5 Underground Fire

Accident Investigation Board Report
- Completed

February 14 Radiological Release

Accident Investigation Board Report
- Phase I completed
- Phase II – in progress
Recap of Incidents: Layout of the WIPP Underground

Event locations more than 2,300 feet apart

Continuous Air Monitor Alarm Location
(Panel 7 Exhaust Drift)

Salt Haul Truck Fire Location
(North part of mine)

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The REACH system will be used to perform photo/video evaluation of remaining waste containers in room 7 panel 7.

REACH system has been transported to the WIPP underground.
Key Recovery Steps toward Resumption of Operations

- Nuclear Safety Document Revisions (continuing)
- Safety Management Program Revitalization (continuing)
- Underground restoration (underway)
  - Radiological Roll-back
  - Re-Establish Safety Systems
  - Cleanup, Habitability
  - Fire Protection
  - Maintenance and Ground Control
- Expedite mine stability (resume bolting)
- Expedited Panel 6 and Room 7, Panel 7 Closure
- Interim Ventilation (procurement underway)
- Supplemental Ventilation Modifications (initiated)
- Readiness Activities
- Limited Operations
  - On-site waste
  - Off-site waste generators
Radiological Rollback.
- **Resumption of bolting** – one of the highest priorities
  - Preventative maintenance activities on equipment completed
  - Roof bolting/ground control resumed the week of November 10th
- **Waste hoist**
  - Camera inspection of shaft/ropes completed
  - Preventive maintenance and inspections completed
  - Hoist is now operational for transport of equipment – also available for use as emergency egress for personnel
Anticipated Approach:

- Contamination will be fixed or sealed to the mine surface.
- Anticipated use of water spray for most areas of low contamination.
  - Will create a crust on salt surfaces.
- Higher activity areas will utilize a spray-on fixative application.
- After application, floors will be covered with a brattice cloth barrier and ~ 4 inches of mined salt.
Closure of Panel 6 is a high priority of the WIPP recovery plan

NMED approved the initial closure for WIPP Panel 6
  • Includes chain-link, brattice cloth, run-of-mine salt and bulkheads
• **Current Status**
  
  - Ventilation in Filtration Mode
    - 60,000 cfm of filtered air
  
  - Note: WIPP's standard (unfiltered) operational airflow is 425,000 cfm
    - WIPP Permit requires 260,000 cfm

• **Recovery Actions**
  
  - **Phase I** – HEPA skid and fan unit
    - 114,000 cfm of airflow
  
  - **Phase II** – Reconfiguring airlock and bulkheads and additional fans
    - 180,000 cfm airflow
  
  - **Phase III** – Design and construct of new (permanent) ventilation system
    - Capable of providing 420,000 cfm
Recovery Status

- Comprehensive recovery plan – released September 30, 2014 - that puts safety first

- WIPP is making progress on recovery
  - Extensive underground radiological rollback (over 60%)
  - Mine structure evaluation ongoing
  - Panel 6 and Panel 7, Room 7 closure preparations

- The current workforce is being maintained and utilized
  - Cross-training personnel
  - Changing work schedules to support time-critical recovery activities.
  - Performing readiness activities
  - Fostering a nuclear safety culture change.

- WIPP continues to communicate often and transparently throughout this process with -
  - Frequent briefings for regulators and stakeholder groups
  - Regular town hall meetings
  - Weekly WIPP updates
Additional information is available

http://www.wipp.energy.gov

1-800-336-9477

or on Twitter: @WIPPNEWS