

Allen, Pam, NMENV

From: Maestas, Ricardo, NMENV
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2016 9:14 AM
To: Allen, Pam, NMENV
Subject: FW: VOC update

From: Maestas, Ricardo, NMENV
Sent: Thursday, March 03, 2016 11:52 AM
To: Roberts, Kathryn, NMENV; Kieling, John, NMENV; LucasKamat, Susan, NMENV
Cc: Smith, Coleman, NMENV; Teeter, William, NMENV; Briley, Siona, NMENV; Maestas, Ricardo, NMENV
Subject: VOC update

UPDATE 03/03/2016

Rick Chavez and Stuart Jones called at 10:30am today.

The Safety Pause is still in effect in the norther SDI and southern part of the WIPP underground. These same areas continue to be restricted to workers. The current expectation is that the Safety Pause will be lifted by this Sunday or early next week.

WIPP folks initially wanted to brief NMED on Permit required inspections that would potentially be missed in the affected areas because of the stand down.

After looking into things further they mentioned this morning that no required inspections have been missed thus far or were expected to be missed if the stand down was lifted soon.

WIPP will be keeping NMED updated as to when the stand down is lifted and/or if Permit required inspections are missed.

WIPP currently reports the status of Permit required inspection in the Admin Order reports they submit and are also required to log this information in the facility record.

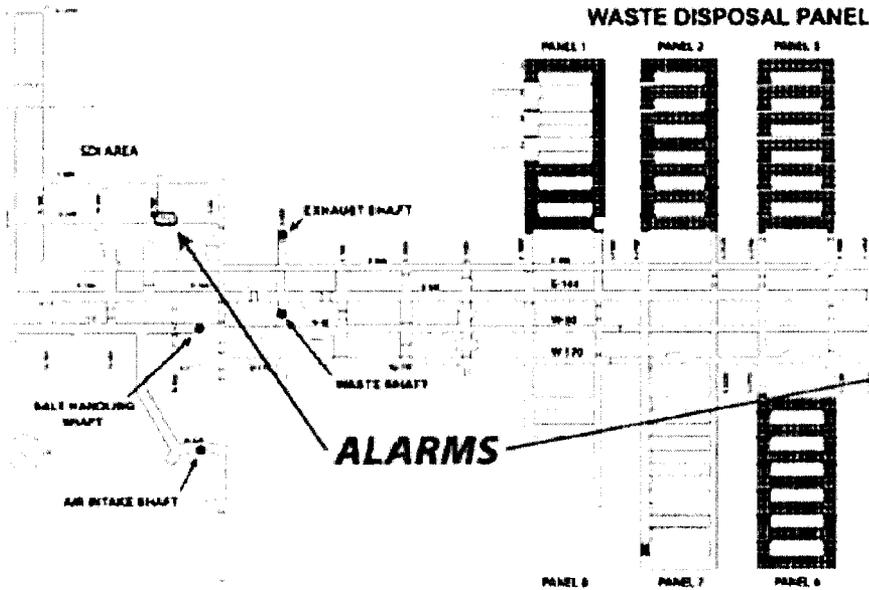
If I get any other information I'll be sure to pass along.

Rick mentioned that there were a couple of reports on this in the Carlsbad newspaper the Current Argus.

Argus stories :

- Feb 23rd - <http://www.currentargus.com/story/news/local/2016/02/23/wipp-stop-works-deal-poor-air-quality/80800600/>
- Feb 26th - <http://www.currentargus.com/story/news/special-reports/wipp/2016/02/26/work-wipp-continues-after-safety-pause/80997098/>





From: Maestas, Ricardo, NMENV
Sent: Friday, February 26, 2016 3:59 PM
To: Roberts, Kathryn, NMENV; Kieling, John, NMENV; LucasKamat, Susan, NMENV
Cc: Smith, Coleman, NMENV; Maestas, Ricardo, NMENV
Subject: FW: News from WIPP

UPDATE:

Elevated VOC levels in the WIPP underground.

WIPP folks notified me on Monday afternoon, 2/22, that workers had again discovered elevated VOCs in the WIPP underground and that they would let me know more details as soon as they were available. Concerns with elevated VOCs in the WIPP underground were also communicated last Friday, see email below.

This afternoon I received additional information for the Monday, 2/22, event.

WIPP operations initiated a Safety Pause on Monday after again discovering elevated VOCs, likely NO₂ and CO, near the Salt Disposal Investigation (SDI) in the northern part of the underground and this time also just outside the entrance to Panel 5 at the very south end of the underground. Workers use hand held air quality monitors to check the air of an area before workers are allowed in.

The Safety Pause remains in place. Access has been restricted and barricades have been set up around the SDI area and just south of Panels 3 and 7 (S-2520 in the W-170, W-30 and E-140 drifts).

It is believed that the elevated VOCs continue to be the result of the restricted mine ventilation and the combustion products of the diesel bolters.

More information on this may be available next week.
 I will keep you posted.

Thank you.

Ricardo

From: Maestas, Ricardo, NMENV
Sent: Friday, February 19, 2016 11:58 AM

To: Roberts, Kathryn, NMENV; Kieling, John, NMENV; Smith, Coleman, NMENV
Cc: Maestas, Ricardo, NMENV (Ricardo.Maestas@state.nm.us)
Subject: News from WIPP

Hello all,

Rick and Anthony from WIPP gave me a call around 11am . They called to give us a heads up on a couple of issues.

On February 17, 2016 WIPP personnel discovered elevated reading for CO and NO2 in the underground near the Salt Disposal Investigation, or SDI, Area at the north end.

The Central Monitoring Room was notified, workers were moved away from the area, barricades were put in place to keep workers away and ventilation was increased to that area for about three hours.

After three hours levels were checked again and were found to be normal. Workers were allowed to return.

The current thought is that there was not enough ventilation going through the area and the higher levels were the result of by-products of bolting activity in the vicinity.

On February 3, 2016 underground workers returned to the site of the small roof fall that had occurred in January 2015 in the north access drift to Panel 3 at S-2750 to check the conditions (attached is the February 9, 2015 Notice to NMED regarding the January 2015 discovery). This areas has been off limits since November 2014. Workers discovered that additional salt from the "back" or roof had come down. Rick mentioned that the new roof fall is very similar in size to the last one but gave no dimensions. The January 2015 discovery was 6' wide by 6' long by 18" thick .

Rick stated that they have evaluated the Permit requirements for notifications and mentioned that they have decided no additional action is required at this time. They feel that since this new roof fall is in the exact area of the last one, the February 9, 2015 Notice "of a trend towards unstable conditions" suffices. The area will continue to be monitored and access will continue to be restricted.

Note that that attached notification is from the January 2015 discovery. Cole and I will review this last report and Permit requirements and decide if a new notification is necessary for this new roof fall discovery.

Let me know if you have any questions on the above information.
Thank you.

Ricardo Maestas
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