



Department of Energy
Carlsbad Area Office
P. O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221

ENV
DEC 9 25 AM '96

November 29, 1996

The Honorable Gary Johnson
New Mexico State Capitol
Santa Fe, NM 87503

Dear Governor Johnson:

I am pleased to announce that the Carlsbad Area Office (CAO) intends to initiate transuranic waste shipments to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) within the next year. As required by the U.S. Congress in passing the WIPP Land Withdrawal Amendment Act, these shipments will begin by November 30, 1997.

This notification responds to the following requirements:

- The WIPP Land Withdrawal Act (amended in October 1996) directing the DOE to notify the states and Indian tribes in advance of any shipments to be made to the WIPP; and
- Requirements drafted by the Western Governors' Association and the State of New Mexico to provide advance notice of any transuranic waste shipments and at least a one year advance notification of the DOE's intent to make the first shipment.

In accordance with these requirements, I will send you, by January 31, 1997, a projected shipment schedule for all of calendar year 1998. This annual schedule will be updated every six months.

The first shipments, which will come from the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site, and the Los Alamos National Laboratory, will carry contact-handled waste that meets all waste acceptance criteria certification and transportation requirements. As soon as the CAO has updated shipping schedules, I will provide you with additional information about radioisotope and curie content of the first shipments.

These shipments will culminate many years of environmental research the Department of Energy has dedicated to establishment of safe disposal of transuranic radioactive waste. I appreciate the cooperative working relationship we have had with your office to achieve this milestone.

If you have any questions about the shipping schedule or protocols, please call me at (505) 234-7300.

Sincerely,

George E. Dials
Manager



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
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