

U.S. Department of Energy
Carlsbad Area Office
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant
P.O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221

TO BENITO GARCIA

Site -
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DOENews

Media Day

Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Preview Tour

Who: News media are invited to descend 2,150 feet beneath the earth's surface for a full access tour of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP).

This is the final opportunity for full access to project facilities prior to the beginning of transuranic radioactive waste disposal operations.

What: In March, the Department of Energy declared the WIPP facility and personnel operationally ready to accept transuranic radioactive waste shipments, pending the approval of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Secretary of Energy Federico Peña.

A cornerstone of the DOE's national clean-up strategy, the WIPP is designed to permanently dispose of transuranic waste generated by defense-related activities. Transuranic waste consists of clothing, tools, rags, residues, debris and other disposable items contaminated with trace amounts of radioactive elements, mostly plutonium.

Project facilities include the waste handling building and disposal rooms excavated in an ancient, stable salt formation almost one-half mile underground.

Transportation and safety equipment and procedures will be demonstrated. Project experts will be available for interviews. Tour includes photo ops.

Where: WIPP project, 26 miles east of Carlsbad, New Mexico

When: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Mountain Time), May 7, 1998.

Please RSVP before 4:30 p.m. (MT) May 5, 1998, by calling 1-800-493-9768.

