

WIPP Transportation Safety Program Update

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Radioactive & Hazardous Waste Interim Committee

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WIPP Program Overview

WIPP provides permanent, underground disposal of transuranic (TRU) and TRU-mixed waste generated by the U.S. nuclear weapons program, ensuring long-term environmental protection and national security.

Established by the U.S. Department of Energy in the 1980s, WIPP was designed to safely isolate radioactive waste—such as contaminated tools, clothing, and equipment—from over 20 DOE sites. Located in the geologically stable salt beds of southeastern New Mexico, WIPP is expected to receive up to 175,000 cubic meters of TRU waste over a 35-year operational span.



Glossary

- Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project (AMWTP)
- Department of Transportation (DoT)
- Idaho National Laboratory (INL)
- Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL)
- Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL)
- Standard Large Box 2 (SLB2)
- Surface Contaminated Object (SCO)
- Transuranic (TRU) Waste
- TRUPACT-III (Transuranic Package Transporter Model III)
 - a certified Type B shipping cask developed by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) specifically for transporting large transuranic (TRU) waste items to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP).
- Type B Cask
 - a robust, heavily engineered container used to transport high-activity radioactive materials, including TRU waste, across public roads, railways, or airspace. These casks are designed to withstand extreme conditions and meet stringent safety standards set by the DoT and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).
- Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP)

FY26 Task Force Activities

A Task Force meeting will be held before the end of the calendar year; the specific date is forthcoming.

Meeting Focus: Inter-Site TRU Waste Shipments from LLNL and LANL to INL's AMWTP

- LLNL and LANL must ship oversized TRU-contaminated gloveboxes and containers to INL's AMWTP for processing.
- Neither site (LLNL or LANL) has capacity for size reduction or long-term storage of these items.
- Shipments will use Type A packaging under DoT special permit or SCO protocols.
- Authorized under DOE Order 460.2B, which allows inter-site TRU shipments outside the TRU Waste Transportation Plan when agreed to by DOE and affected States/Tribes.
- Type A shipments proceed only if:
 - Type B casks (e.g., TRUPACT-III) are unavailable, or
 - Waste exceeds TRUPACT-III size limits.
- WIPP-designated routes will be used from LLNL and LANL to INL.
- TRUPACT-III fleet is currently offline for maintenance and refurbishment.

WIPP Working Group Update:

- Five Year Cooperative Agreement between the DOE and EMNRD (closing year four of five)
- Four Funded State Agencies Working Group (DOH, NMED, DPS, EMNRD):
 - \$1.5 million requested for fiscal year 2026 (Flat budget request)
 - Preparing to hire two vacant positions within the WIPP Program
 - Program Coordinator
 - Training Coordinator
 - Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Transportation Emergency Exercise (WIPPTREX)
 - March of 2026 in Raton/Colfax County
 - The WIPPTREX is a coordinated training exercise conducted along the shipping corridor every two years
 - Coordination with City, County, NMSP, DOE, MCMC, Colorado DPS, Trinidad Fire

Working Group participating in WIPPTREX Training (2024) →



Shipment Estimates: August 1, 2025 – July 31, 2026

Shipper Site	Shipments Sent to WIPP
ANL-E	7
INL	358
LANL	137
LLNL	2
ORNL	11
SRS	56
Total	Up to: 571

Thank you.

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