

WIPP Update

**New Mexico Radioactive and Hazardous Materials Committee
Carlsbad, N.M.**



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Topics

- February 2014 salt truck fire and Accident Investigation Board findings
- February radiological release event – ongoing AIB investigation
- Entries into the WIPP underground resume
- Roadmap to recovery
- Key components of the recovery plan
- Funding
- Q & A



WIPP Salt Haul Truck Fire Event – Feb. 5, 2014



WIPP Salt Haul Truck Fire Event - log

Date and Time	Event
February 5, 2014 10:48am	Employees notices fire under salt haul truck; 86 Employees in the WIPP underground
February 5, 2014 10:51am	Emergency evacuation alarm sounded; employees instructed to evacuate mine
February 5, 2014 10:58am	Ventilation changed to filtration mode
February 5, 2014 11:01am	The first evacuation of workers to the surface begins
February 5, 2014 11:34am	The third and final evacuation trip; full accountability of the underground achieved
February 5, 2014 5:22pm	First mine rescue team enters the underground; checks air quality and observes mine truck
February 5, 2014 11:00pm	Second mine rescue team enters underground; discharges foam suppressant; fire declared out
February 6, 2014 1:05am	Event terminated, EOC and JIC are deactivated

AIB Salt Haul Truck Fire Findings

Positive Observations

- Supervisors and employees in the underground proactively alerted other workers of the fire and need to evacuate before the evacuation alarm was sounded.
- Workers assisted each other during the evacuation, including helping them to don self-rescuers and SCSRs.
- Personnel in the underground exhibited detailed knowledge of the underground and ventilation splits.
- NWP on-site medical response was effective in treating personnel.

Report Findings

- Maintenance program was ineffective.
- Fire protection program was less than adequate.
- CMR response (evaluation and protective actions) were less than adequate.
- Emergency management/preparedness and response programs were ineffective.
- Different treatment of waste versus non-waste handling equipment. (Nuclear facility versus mine culture)
- Inadequate oversight from government agencies

WIPP Radiological Release Event - log

Date and Time	Event
February 14, 2014 11:13pm	“HI RAD” alarm received in Central Monitoring Room (CMR) from Continuous Air Monitor (CAM) at Panel 7 exhaust drift
February 14, 2014 11:14pm	Underground ventilation system shifted to HEPA filtration
February 15, 2014 7:15am	Station A (before HEPA filtration) filter papers show 4.4 million disintegrations per minutes alpha contamination
February 15, 2014 9:15am	Station B (after HEPA filtration) filter papers show 28,000 dpm alpha & 5,900 dpm beta contamination
February 15, 2014 9:34am	On-site personnel were directed to shelter in place
February 15, 2014 5:57pm	Site surveys reported negative for radiological contamination
February 15, 2014 6:35pm	All non-essential personnel released from the site
February 16, 2014 9:17pm	The emergency event terminated, EOC and JIC are deactivated

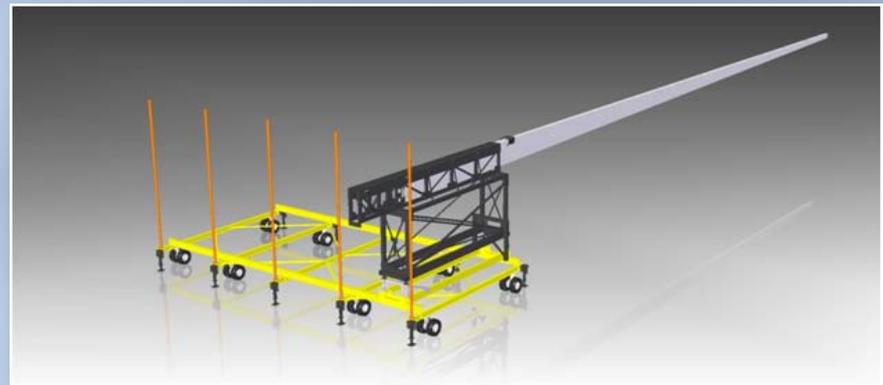
Radiological Release Event – Feb. 14, 2014



- During the May 15, 2014 entry, Recovery Team members were able to obtain evidence of a damaged waste container
- Discoloration due to a heat producing event was visible

Support to the DOE Accident Investigation Board

- Additional samples from Panel 7, Room 7 were taken on 8/15 – to SRS
- Project REACH
 - Equipment engineering by CRG
 - Extendable composite boom held by movable cradle atop support structure
 - Install underground by end of September
 - Anticipate three weeks visual mapping



Radiological Roll-back

- Radiological surveys of potentially impacted areas of the U/G – release based regulatory standards for:
 - Air particulate contamination
 - Fixed surface contamination
 - Removable contamination
 - External dose rates
- Areas below release limits reposted as Radiological Buffer Areas (RBA)
- Resumption of normal work in RBAs without respirators or anti-contamination clothing.



WIPP Recovery

- Geo-technical evaluation
- Ground Control
- Waste Hoist
- Resumption of Bolting
- Panel Closure
- EXO/SDI
- Extraordinary Compensatory Measures



“We are going to get WIPP Operating again – safely and doing what is a critical job for the country”

– Secretary Ernest Moniz (12 August 2014)

Recovery Plan: Key Points of the Strategy

- **Safety** is paramount; recovery will proceed at a pace commensurate with work force capabilities, mine conditions, and status of WIPP infrastructure and systems
- **Recovery** will reflect the permanent change to performing activities and operations in a mine with “contaminated” and “clean” areas.
- **Accident investigation findings** will be prioritized into pre/post start categories, based on phased recovery workscope, and corrected as needed prior performing the work
- **Phased approach** to recover and return to full operations (ventilation, plant equipment, nuclear safety, mine decontamination, etc.)

Recovery Plan: Key Points of the Strategy (cont.)

- **Compensatory safety measures** will be put in place if corrective actions cannot be accomplished prior to needed start of work (e.g. roof bolting, mine stabilization)
- **Regulatory strategy** is to work closely, communicate often with New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to expedite needed permit modifications as required
- **DOE Orders**, standards and regulations will be tailored to meet project objectives
- **WIPP Recovery** will be managed as a Project and not a Management and Operations approach

Funding

- Appropriations process continues for FY2015
- Recovery funds anticipated in addition to base funding for operations
- Adequate funding is critical for full implementation of the WIPP Recovery Plan

Looking ahead

- All issues raised by the DOE Accident Investigation Board are being addressed
- We will resume operations in a safe, compliant manner



Questions & Answers