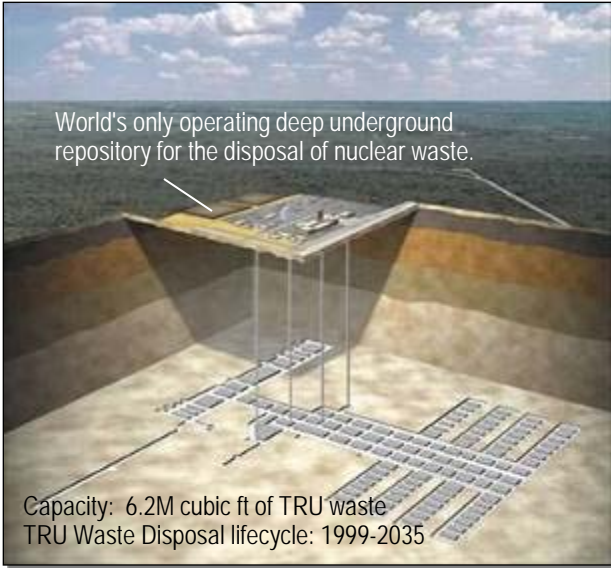




About WIPP

April 2011

The U.S. Department of Energy's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant
Located near Carlsbad, New Mexico



World's only operating deep underground repository for the disposal of nuclear waste.

Capacity: 6.2M cubic ft of TRU waste
TRU Waste Disposal lifecycle: 1999-2035

Mission

Safely dispose of our nation's transuranic (TRU) waste left over from the research and production of nuclear weapons. This waste is disposed of in ancient salt formations located 2,150 feet below the surface.

TRU Waste



Clothing, tools, rags, debris, residues and other items contaminated with man-made radioactive elements that are heavier than uranium.

There are two kinds: contact-handled (CH) and remote-handled (RH), which requires special shielding.

Productivity

- 72,422 Cubic meters of TRU waste disposed
- 139,900 TRU waste containers disposed
- 9,207 TRU waste shipments made
- 11 million Loaded miles travelled
- 82,000 Drums certified by WIPP's Central Characterization Project
- 17 TRU waste sites completed
- 48% Lifecycle TRU waste inventory disposed

Safety

- No radiological releases or fatalities during plant 12-year operating history
- Received state 2010 Safety and Health Innovator of the Year award.
- 23 consecutive years awarded Mine Operator of the Year by State of New Mexico
- Received US Transportation Council Award for Transport Safety



WIPP Facts . . .



Area underlain by bedded salt
Area of salt domes or salt anticlines



Salt is the reason for WIPP's location: scientific research found that deep, underground salt formations are suitable for the long-term isolation of nuclear waste.

The prestigious National Academy of Sciences has said that the WIPP transportation system is "safer than that employed for any other hazardous material in the U.S...."

Risks posed by above-ground storage of TRU waste . . .



2000 Cerro Grande fire near Los Alamos National Lab in New Mexico



2008 tornado near Argonne National Lab in Illinois



2001 Mississippi River flooding near US Army Materiel Command in Illinois



1980 California earthquake with epicenter near Lawrence Livermore National Lab

Risk reduction achieved thru WIPP TRU waste disposal . . .

TRU Waste Sites Completed:

- ARCO PA
- AREVA WA
- Battelle Columbus Labs OH
- Brookhaven National Lab NY
- Energy Technology Eng Center CA
- Fernald Site OH
- GE Vallecitos Nuclear, CA
- KAPL Nuclear Fuel Services TN
- Lawrence Berkeley National Lab CA
- Lawrence Livermore NL-Site 300 CA
- Lovelace Respiratory Research Inst. NM
- Mound Site OH
- Rocky Flats Environmental Tech. Site CO
- Teledyne Brown NJ
- University of Missouri Research Reactor
- US Army Materiel Command IL
- Nevada Test Site, NV



Before

Rocky Flats CO



After



Before

Fernald OH



After



Tens of millions of Americans no longer live near radioactive TRU waste thanks to the disposal of that waste in the WIPP repository.

Active community support has been a key to WIPP success . . .

The citizens and leaders of Carlsbad, New Mexico have been actively engaged in finding solutions for our nation's nuclear waste issues for more than 30 years. They have played instrumental roles in all phases of WIPP: site selection, testing, construction, legislation, permitting, startup, operation, and funding.

Governments from around the world and our nation's Blue Ribbon Commission for America's Nuclear Future have visited Carlsbad and WIPP to study how Carlsbad and the Department of Energy work together to achieve common objectives.

The Carlsbad Department of Development (CDOD) supports the Blue Ribbon Commission process to recommend to Congress alternatives for managing high level waste and stands ready to help the nation solve its nuclear waste problems.



Then Carlsbad Mayor Bob Forrest speaks at WIPP 10th anniversary celebration.

For more information . . .

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