

## **You can speak out against the dangerous WIPP Nuclear Dump!**

The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) is a geologic repository where transuranic (plutonium-contaminated) waste from manufacturing nuclear bombs is emplaced 2,150 feet below ground in tunnels mined from salt rock. During the 1980s, while construction was underway, thousands of New Mexicans objected to WIPP with protests, demonstrations, lawsuits, letters, participation in hearings, and other actions. In 1992, Congress passed a law to allow WIPP to operate so long as it did not handle high-level or commercial wastes, it was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency, permitted by the New Mexico Environment Department, and met other safety requirements. The first truckload of waste arrived at WIPP on March 26, 1999. By February 5, 2014, more than 91,000 cubic meters of nuclear waste arrived in 11,894 shipments.

**Photo: Fire  
Underground  
WIPP Site  
February 5, 2014**

### **Accidents at WIPP**

The objective of this pilot project was to isolate plutonium and other dangerous radioactive isotopes for at least 10,000 years. WIPP failed less than 16 years after it opened. On February 14, 2014, at least one of the barrels burst open, sending radioactive material into the air near Carlsbad, contaminating at least 22 workers. WIPP was doomed from the start. The Department of Energy's original site selection criteria were ignored for political reasons when the underground salt deposits in southeastern New Mexico were chosen to isolate radioactive materials forever. It was insanity, or incompetence, to think such hazardous wastes should be buried in a region known for intense oil and gas drilling, and unknown geologic pathways inherent in karst formations. Although technically and conceptually flawed from the beginning, operationally WIPP went out of control starting in early February 2014 with an underground fire caused by lax maintenance on a salt-hauling truck.

**Then came the Valentines Day release of radiation.**

### **How You Can Make a Difference**

This year is a recertification year and the Environmental Protection Agency is coming to Albuquerque and Carlsbad to hear what New Mexicans have to say about recertifying WIPP. Citizens for Alternatives to Radioactive Dumping (CARD), and other watchdog groups such as Southwest Research and Information Center (SRIC) are saying "Don't recertify WIPP!" especially before there is an independent investigation of the accidents at WIPP.

**Please come on June 17 in Albuquerque from 2:30-6 & 7-9 PM**

**Embassy Suites Hotel (1000 Woodward Pl, NE)**

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**Transportation available.**