

August [REDACTED], 2016

Mr. Ricardo Maestas  
New Mexico Environment Department  
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Re: Public Comment about June 2016 Class 2 Permit Modification Requests about Reducing Room Ventilation Rate and the Contingency Plan at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

Dear Mr. Maestas:

I provide the following public comments about the Class 2 Permit Modification Requests to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) hazardous waste permit issued by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED).

1. Reducing Room Ventilation Rate. The request should be denied. To allow workers in active rooms with waste handling occurring with less than 35,000 standard cubic feet per minute (scfm) of ventilation is not protective of worker and public health and the environment. If there is not adequate ventilation for waste emplacement, no such activity should be allowed.
2. Contingency Plan. The Plan should be revised to reflect the significant existing underground contamination from the February 2014 waste drum(s) explosion. This is especially true for the E-300 drift (tunnel), which cannot be used as a secondary evacuation route because respiratory protection equipment is and must be required to be used in more than 2,000 feet of that drift. The problems caused by the underground contamination must be addressed before WIPP can be re-opened.

Please include my name on the WIPP facility mailing list.

Thank you for your careful consideration of my comments. I look forward to receiving the NMED's response.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]