

Email to: **Madai.Corral@state.nm.us**
Subject Line: **HWB 21-02 WIPP SHAFT COMMENT**

Ms. Madai Corral, Hearing Clerk
New Mexico Environment Department (NMED)

Dear Ms. Corral:

I join with many other people to object to the proposed New Shaft and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) expansion. Please deny the New Shaft draft permit modification.

I object because the proposed New Shaft is not needed for ventilation. The Department of Energy (DOE) and NMED have not been transparent about the New Shaft's central role in DOE's WIPP expansion plans. I also object because the public process for the New Shaft permit modification has been defective and inequitable. **For this reason alone, this draft permit must be denied.**

The NMED Hazardous Waste Bureau insists on describing the New Shaft solely as a ventilation shaft and refuses to mention the true purpose of the shaft, as the lynch pin of the construction that will more than double the disposal capacity of WIPP. Censoring information and supporting DOE's false narrative about the purpose and need for this modification is one way the public process is defective.

In addition, although NMED promised to study the history and background of potentially affected communities and to address community needs and concerns, only some minimal notification and translation needs have been addressed. The thousands of pollution sources and high cancer mortality rates in the area are, again, not even mentioned in the Hazardous Waste Bureau's Updated Fact Sheet or anywhere else. Despite numerous public comments, these and other concerns were not considered in the drafting of the New Shaft modification. This is another way the public process is defective and discriminatory.

And though NMED promised to define which documents are "vital," or important, and translate them so people who are not fluent in English would have the same access to information as English speakers have, this has not been done. The public notices and the Updated Fact Sheet in no way summarize the draft permit and provide very little or no information about the permit modification. The draft permit does not fully address the New Shaft, the WIPP facility, the underground contamination, or the hydrology and geology near the site. It provides an incorrect justification for the New Shaft. This is wholly inadequate to meet the regulatory requirements for the general, English-speaking public, who can read the draft permit and other English-only documents found in the administrative record. Non-English speakers would find it impossible to inform themselves adequately about this complex facility and draft permit from the small amount of information actually translated into Spanish. This is another way the public process has been defective and also inequitable.

The draft permit modification for the proposed New Shaft must be denied. The shaft is not needed for ventilation and the public process has been defective and inequitable.

Sincerely,
(Your **Name, Address** and **Date**)