

CHAIRMAN Resource

From: myla reson <myla.reson@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2014 12:33 AM
To: Kyle Marksteiner; Kyle Marksteiner
Cc: Deborah Reade; Don Hancock; Janet Greenwald; joni arends; Lauren Villagran; Lilly Munster; Trais Kliphuis; Sharon Brown; Nick Stone; Sasha Pyle; Shannyn Sollitt; Mike Murphy; Zack Ponce; Zack Ponce; CHAIRMAN Resource; Dean Wilkie; Tim Runyon
Subject: Query re WIPP waste hoist sump water

Hi Kyle,

I have a number of questions related to water in the WIPP waste hoist sump.

Please note that I have copied NRC Chair Allison MacFarlane on this query due to her years of work related to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant.

Background:

DoE stated in it's July 22, 2014 WIPP Update:

"Water levels in the waste shaft sump are significant because contact with the steel tail ropes for the 45-ton Waste Hoist may have resulted in contamination of the ropes."

During her presentation at the most recent WIPP town hall meeting (November 6, 2014), Nuclear Waste Partnership (NWP) Deputy Recovery Project Manager, Tammy Reynolds stated that "between thirty and thirty-six thousand gallons of water" had accumulated in the waste shaft sump - that the water had accumulated as a result of condensation and "other water filtration" - and that NWP was in the process of pumping water out of the sump in an effort to "uncover" waste hoist guide rope weights located at the bottom of the sump.

So here are some of my questions:

- 1) What (if any) is the extent of the contamination of the waste hoist steel tail ropes? (please provide specific measurements and specify the radionuclides measured)
- 2) What (if any) is the level of contamination of the water remaining in the sump - and the water pumped out of the sump?
- 3) What is the disposition of the water pumped out of the sump?
- 4) Is data publicly available that tracks changes in the volume of water in the waste hoist sump following the February 2014 fire in the WIPP underground?
- 5) Did September and November 2014 severe rain storms in the vicinity of WIPP coincide with increases in accumulated water in the waste hoist sump?
- 6) What are the dimensions of the waste hoist sump, and have those dimensions changed over time due to dissolution of the salt?

- 7) Is the waste hoist sump lined or otherwise protected to retard or prevent erosion caused by water dissolving salt bordering the waste hoist sump?
- 8) What is the greatest volume of water accumulated in the waste hoist sump at any single point in time?
- 9) What is the current volume of water accumulated in the waste hoist sump?
- 10) Does mapping of the pressurized brine reservoir underlying the WIPP indicate the presence of pressurized brine directly below the waste hoist sump?
- 11) What is the closest distance between the bottom of the waste hoist sump and the pressurized brine reservoir underlying WIPP?

Thanks for facilitating obtaining detailed answers to this query.

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"A common denominator, in every single nuclear accident -- a nuclear plant or on a nuclear submarine -- is that before the specialists even know what has happened, they rush to the media saying, 'There's no danger to the public.' They do this before they themselves know what has happened because they are terrified that the public might react violently, either by panic or by revolt." ~ Jacque Cousteau, 1989