Waste Isolation
Pilot Plant

... a critical step toward solving the nation's nuclear waste disposal problem

Emergency Response Training

The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant's (WIPP) States and Tribal Education Program, or STEP, is responsible for training more than 17,000 emergency response professionals in 18 states. This U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) training, begun in 1988, focuses on response to potential incidents involving WIPP waste shipments. Classes address caring for incident victims, guarding the public welfare, protecting the environment, and ensuring the safety of responders. As required by the 1992 WIPP Land Withdrawal Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration reviewed and certified this program in 1993.

Seven courses are offered in the STEP curriculum:

- **First Responder** is an eight-hour course intended for the first arriving emergency units (fire, medical, law enforcement, and rescue). Course topics include a basic WIPP overview, definition and physical characteristics of transuranic waste, shipment configurations for the Transuranic Package Transporter, Model 2 (TRUPACT-II), HalfPACT, and the RH72-B Shipping Cask, an explanation of radiation and radiation protection principles, transportation regulations, Transportation Tracking and Communications (TRANSCOM) system, emergency response actions at the accident site, and the DOE's role in the accident clean-up.

- **First Responder Refresher** is a four-hour course intended for those who have previously attended the WIPP First Responder course or the Command and Control course.

- **Command and Control** is a two-day, eight-hour-per-day course and is intended for those individuals who will be overall or partially in charge at the scene of a WIPP-related accident. Day one consists of the First Responder. Day two consists of topics that include a review of emergency actions for first responders plus a general overview of the Incident Command System (ICS). ICS overview and implementation videos from the International Fire Service Training Association are shown to reinforce the day's lecture. The students then participate in table-top exercises, using scale models of urban and rural highway transportation environments to demonstrate their ability to adapt concepts introduced in the lecture to their own local procedures and requirements. Successful completion of this course provides the potential Incident Commander with the knowledge to safely respond, establish command, and protect the public and environment.

- **Incident Command System (ICS)** is a 16-hour course of instruction based on the national training curriculum from the National Wildfire Coordinating Group in Boise, Idaho. This course has been officially adopted by many state, county, and city governments as the standard for Incident Command. This course discusses organizational development around five major functions that are required at any incident, whether large or small. In addition to this instruction, a section on Radiological Response Teams (RAP) and TRUPACT/HalfPACT recovery has been added.

- **Train-the-Trainer** is a 16-hour program. This class is generally taught in Carlsbad, New Mexico, so students can tour the WIPP site and see – firsthand – why the facility was selected for a permanent nuclear waste repository. These students should be certified as instructors within their appropriate state or local jurisdiction, and have a background in emergency response and hazardous materials. A tour of the WIPP site and part of the First Responder course is presented the first day. On the second day, the First Responder course is completed. In addition, answers to the most commonly asked WIPP questions are provided. Each student will be provided with the training materials that are currently certified by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, as required under the WIPP Land Withdrawal Act.

- **Medical Management** is an eight-hour course intended for hospital emergency room doctors and nurses who may be required to treat a patient that is potentially contaminated with transuranic material from a WIPP transportation accident. The course is taught by experts in the field. The students are introduced to the concepts of radiation physics and radiobiology, which prepare them for the detailed explanation of exposure, contamination, internal contamination, and radionuclide incorporation. Upon completion, students will be able to properly select and prepare an appropriate treatment/decontamination area within the hospital and perform necessary decontamination of a patient. They also are provided with source information for assistance during a real or suspected radiation accident.

For more information:

http://www.wipp.carlsbad.nm.us or call 1-800-336-WIPP

U.S. Department of Energy
Carlsbad Area Office
The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant P.O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, NM 88221 (505) 234-7352

Contact:
DOE/CAO Office of Public Affairs

Westinghouse Communications
P.O. Box 2078
Carlsbad, NM 88221 (505) 234-7515