

**NORTHERN NEW MEXICO CITIZENS' ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Recommendation to the Department of Energy**  
**No. 2016-04**

**Title: WIPP Disposal Priority for LANL**  
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**Background**

The Waste Isolation Pilot Project (WIPP), located in Carlsbad, New Mexico, is the country's only deep geological repository. In February 2014 two separate critical incidents forced the shut-down of WIPP. Since this date, there have been no transuranic waste (TRU) shipments to WIPP. The Department of Energy (DOE) anticipates a December 2016 re-opening and commencement of TRU shipments.

The DOE and New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) entered into a new Order on Consent (CO) in June 2016. This new CO will accelerate the pace of environmental restoration activities and prioritizes cleanup using a campaign approach. However, before these cleanup activities/campaigns can begin, waste should be removed from in and around LANL.

**Observations**

The Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board (NNMCAB) has always worked very closely with DOE, and LANL, to make sound recommendations to DOE concerning legacy waste clean-up activities in and around Los Alamos. The NNMCAB has also worked diligently to keep the citizens of Northern New Mexico aware of the progress of these activities. DOE has always shown positive and respectful consideration to NNMCAB recommendations. LANL has the ability to ship TRU waste year round regardless of inclement weather.

**Comments**

Not only are there several above ground TRU waste drums that need to be removed from LANL, but there are also a multitude of drums below ground that should be shipped off the hill as well. In addition, the Waste Control Specialists (WCS) in Andrews, Texas is storing over 100 drums of similar composition as the drum which reacted at WIPP. Although WCS is storing these drums in a climate controlled setting, DOE EM-LA is paying approximately \$6 million annually for storage fees. The NNMCAB believes these funds would be better utilized for legacy waste cleanup activities contained in the CO.

**Recommendation**

1. The NNMCAB recommends that LANL waste drums located at WCS be DOE's top priority to ship to WIPP, once operations resume.
2. The NNMCAB recommends that all above ground TRU waste drums located at LANL be DOE's top priority.

**Intent**

It is the intent of this recommendation that Los Alamos TRU waste be the top priority for shipments to WIPP once operations resume.

**References**

Compliance Order on Consent, June, 2016.