



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

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FIRST TRANSURANIC WASTE SHIPMENT ARRIVES SAFELY AT WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT IN NEW MEXICO

*Energy Department keeps commitment to move Transuranic Waste off the
Oak Ridge Reservation*

OAK RIDGE, Tenn. – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) achieved a major environmental cleanup milestone this week with the first shipment of Transuranic (TRU) Waste leaving DOE's Oak Ridge site to be permanently disposed in New Mexico, thus honoring its commitment to move this radioactive waste out of Tennessee.

“The first shipment began and others will follow until all Transuranic Waste is safely removed from Oak Ridge,” said Gerald Boyd, Manager of DOE's Oak Ridge Office. “This is another sign of environmental cleanup progress and demonstrates we are keeping our commitment to the State of Tennessee and the public to remove this waste from the Oak Ridge Reservation.”

Transuranic (TRU) Waste is a special class of radioactive material that includes such items as tools, glassware, equipment, protective clothing, debris, and scrap. This type of waste results from decades of defense-related research and development activities at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, with some of the waste dating as far back as the early 1970's.

The type of TRU Waste shipped this week is known as contact-handled, which means it may be directly handled by workers in protective clothing. It was prepared for transport by truck to DOE's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in Carlsbad, New Mexico, where it will be placed in an underground repository. The first shipment left the Oak Ridge Transuranic Waste Processing Center the morning of September 24 and safely arrived at the WIPP site on September 25 at 10:37 a.m. Mountain Time. This journey totaled more than 1,300 miles and took almost 28 hours.

On an annual basis, approximately 35 shipments of contact-handled TRU waste will be made through 2013 in specially-designed stainless steel shipping casks which meet Nuclear Regulatory Commission and U.S. Department of Transportation radiation limits for public safety. The Tennessee Highway Patrol conducts a Level VI safety inspection, which is the commercial vehicle industry's highest level, to ensure there are zero-defects in the vehicle and its cargo while also checking driver qualifications. Equally important, the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) inspects the shipping casks to ensure radiation levels are within regulatory standards to protect the public.

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“Our federal Environmental Management staff, together with our contractor EnergX, have maintained focus on beginning shipments along with our partners at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant,” said Boyd. “We appreciate the support from the State of Tennessee, including the Department of Environment and Conservation, the Highway Patrol and TEMA in making this much anticipated day a reality. When we have completed our shipments, all Transuranic Debris Waste from years past will be gone from Oak Ridge thanks to everyone working together.”

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Photos of the First Shipment



PHOTO DSC_0163 - The first shipment of Transuranic Waste departs the Oak Ridge Reservation on September 24 for a 1,300 mile journey to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in Carlsbad, New Mexico.



PHOTOS DSC_0200 and DSC_0236 - Troopers from the Tennessee Highway Patrol inspect the truck used to transport contact-handled Transuranic Waste in stainless steel shipping casks for the 1,300 mile trip to New Mexico.



PHOTO DSC_0156 – Transuranic Waste Processing Center employees recognize a major accomplishment in the Oak Ridge Environmental Management Program -- the first shipment of contact-handled Transuranic Waste from Oak Ridge to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in Carlsbad, New Mexico.



PHOTO ____ - Safe arrival of the first shipment of Transuranic Waste from the Oak Ridge Transuranic Waste Processing Center on September 25 at DOE's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in Carlsbad, New Mexico.