



WIPP: Planned Change Request for Magnesium Oxide (MgO)

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has submitted a planned change request to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) related to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). Specifically, DOE is requesting a reduction in the amount of MgO, an engineered barrier, to be placed within the WIPP repository.

Background & Summary

As part of EPA's WIPP Certification Decision in 1998, EPA required that the disposal facility include both natural and engineered barriers in order to ensure that repository releases will be well-within established regulatory limits. MgO was included as an engineered barrier in DOE's original Certification Application that was submitted in 1996.

For more information, please refer to the DOE document entitled, "WIPP Technical Fact Sheet: Planned Change Request for Magnesium Oxide." The document includes information regarding the detailed proposal for reducing MgO, and background information, analyses and calculations explaining the DOE's rationale.

How Can You Get Involved?

We posted DOE's official planned change request – as well as supplementary documentation (e.g., technical fact sheet, correspondence, reports, etc.) – on our website at www.epa.gov/radiation/wipp. We will update our website as new documentation becomes available.

EPA is interested in comments that you have on this issue. Once all supplementary information on this topic has been posted, we will notify all interested parties (via our website, e-mail, and the WIPP-NEWS listserv) and an unofficial 30-day comment period will begin.

If you wish to submit comments to EPA on DOE's MgO change request or any of the website information related to this topic, please send them to Ray Lee via any of the ways listed below:

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By Fax: 202-343-2305 (Attn: Ray Lee)

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