

PUBLIC NOTICE
UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6 DALLAS, TEXAS
RE-AUTHORIZATION APPROVAL FOR STORAGE AND DISPOSAL
OF POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYL (PCB) TRANSURANIC (PCB/TRU) AND PCB/TRU
MIXED HAZARDOUS WASTE AT THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT (WIPP) CARLSBAD, NEW MEXICO

The United States Environmental Agency (EPA) Region 6 office in Dallas, Texas is proposing to re-authorize the WIPP to dispose of nonliquid PCB contaminated transuranic waste (PCB/TRU waste) and PCB/TRU waste mixed with hazardous waste (PCB/TRU mixed waste). The facility is located approximately 26 miles southeast of Carlsbad in Eddy County, New Mexico. The facility is designed to manage, store, and dispose of PCB/TRU waste and PCB/TRU mixed waste in subterranean vaults 2,150 feet underground. EPA has the authority to approve the storage and disposal of PCBs under Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), part 761, subpart D.

PCB/TRU waste storage will have no change and is limited to the following areas: the Parking Area Container Storage Unit and the Waste Handling Building (WHB) Container Storage Unit. The Parking Arwa Container Storage Unit provides a storage capacity up to 8,863 cubic feet of waste. The WHB Container Storage Unit provides a maximum storage capacity of up to 6,854 cubic feet of PCB/TRU waste.

PCBs were normally used as dielectric fluids in electrical equipment. In 1979, PCB dielectric fluids were banned from manufacture to limit further release of PCBs into lakes and streams, where they may bioaccumulate in the food chain into game fish that could be harmful if eaten. PCBs have been linked to liver and kidney damage if ingested in high concentrations over long periods of time. Proper land disposal of nonliquid PCBs, such as drained transformers and contaminated soil, provides the public with additional protection against PCB releases into the aquatic food chain.

This notice opens a 45-day comment period, starting February 15, 2024, during which requests may be made for a public meeting. EPA may hold a public meeting if it determines there is a significant degree of public interest in the application, or if requested by a local legislator. To obtain a copy of the proposed approval documentation please visit <https://www.epa.gov/pcbs/epa-region-6-polychlorinated-biphenyls-pcbs>. To make a comment, please contact Mr. Erik Christianson, EPA Region 6, RCRA Permits and Solid Waste Section, by emailing Christianson.Erik@epa.gov.