



**Department of Energy**  
Carlsbad Field Office  
P. O. Box 3090  
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221

AUG 27 2009

Jonathan Edwards, Director  
Radiation Protection Division  
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20460

Subject: Shielded Container Planned Change Request

Dear Mr. Edwards:

This letter is in reply to your correspondence to our office dated December 11, 2008, regarding the Planned Change Request for Shielded Containers that the U.S. Department of Energy Carlsbad Field Office submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on November 15, 2007. This letter and associated enclosure provide updated information related to nuclear safety aspects of future Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) operations involving shielded containers.

The criticality safety analysis, discussed in the attached enclosure, uses waste container storage and disposal configurations that would result in worst case criticality scenarios. The emplacement configurations depicted in this document may not reflect actual future waste emplacement scenarios. WIPP Waste Handling Operations will perform operational and safety evaluations using test shielded containers and mockups to ensure the containers will be safely emplaced.

If you have any questions please contact Russ Patterson at 575-234-7457.

Sincerely,



David C. Moody  
Manager

Enclosure

cc

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| T. Peake, EPA        | * ED |
| C. Byrum, EPA        | ED   |
| R. Lee, EPA          | ED   |
| V. Daub, CBFO        | ED   |
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