

Section 6: Medical Preparedness

Lead States: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico

The Issue: Effective medical response to a WIPP transportation incident requires a clear understanding of radiological response plans and procedures by emergency medical personnel in the field and at hospitals, adequate training, and the necessary supplies and equipment.

The Objective: Establish and maintain an effective emergency medical response capability along the WIPP transportation routes.

The Approach: First responders and medical personnel along the WIPP routes are an important and integral component of the comprehensive emergency response system. The Technical Advisory Group developed a *Regional Medical Preparedness Action Plan (Action Plan)* for the WIPP shipping campaign. This plan identifies key elements and activities for emergency medical preparedness for a WIPP transportation incident. These include: assessments of hospital readiness; development and refinement of radiological response plans and procedures; training, drills and exercises; and the identification and purchase of appropriate radiological and non-radiological supplies and equipment. The states may use the *Action Plan* as the basis for developing the emergency medical preparedness program that best meets their respective individual needs, and will strive for consistency among state programs wherever possible.

To initiate the *Action Plan*, the WGA coordinated an assessment of the medical facilities in the five states between the Idaho National Laboratory and the WIPP. This assessment included recommendations for strengthening medical preparedness for the WIPP shipments. These states are now carrying out the recommendations, as appropriate. Other states are encouraged to conduct a medical preparedness assessment of their medical facilities.

Western States on the WIPP transportation corridor continue to work with potentially affected medical facilities and personnel to ensure the development of adequate, up-to-date radiological response plans and procedures. These plans and procedures must include provisions for the protection of emergency medical responders and for the treatment of incident victims who may have been exposed to or contaminated by radioactive materials. Planning and response guidance is provided by such organizations as the American Medical Association, American College of Emergency Physicians, the Joint Council on the Accreditation of Hospital Organizations and the REACTS.

Training for all first responders and pre-hospital and hospital emergency medical personnel is an important element of the WIPP Medical Preparedness Program. First responders, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and hospital emergency

department personnel, who may be required to handle and provide treatment to a TRU Waste transportation incident victims, must be prepared to do so in a safe and effective manner. Training encompasses classroom courses, in-hospital drills, and field exercises. Requisite hospital personnel training will be provided through Washington TRU Solutions, the management and operations contractor for the WIPP facility. The DOE-CBFO committed to provide this training to the Western Corridor States in its Cooperative Agreement with the WGA.

For states conducting emergency response field exercises such as a WIPP Transportation Emergency Exercise (WIPPTREX), emergency medical personnel should be involved in the exercise and first responders should be provided medical training before the exercise. First responders and pre-hospital and hospital emergency medical personnel are key players in any comprehensive WIPP emergency preparedness program.

Each state should assess current emergency medical technician and paramedic training opportunities, and include hazardous materials response in the curricula. That assessment should specifically include radioactive materials and patient care related to potential exposure or contamination from radioactive materials. The continuity of first responders, pre-hospital and hospital training response procedures should be assessed. Based on the lead states' recommendations, the *Hospital Emergency Response for Radiation Injuries and the Contaminated Patient* course should include how to deal with pre-hospital and medical issues.

Finally, the states are working to ensure emergency medical personnel are properly equipped to handle a TRU Waste transportation incident. The *Action Plan* lists recommended supplies and equipment for hospitals, and states should include equipment needs in their medical assessments.

Evaluation: Key elements and activities needed for an effective response are identified in the *Action Plan*. This *Action Plan* serves as the basis for assessing the adequacy of the regional emergency medical response capability for a TRU Waste incident.

Each state will be responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the WIPP emergency medical preparedness capability within its borders. Each state should include in-hospital drills and various field exercises, such as WIPPTREX, in their evaluations. The adequacy of emergency medical response plans, procedures, and equipment; the effectiveness of training; and the performance of emergency medical personnel will be evaluated. Areas for improvement will be identified.

For each DOE sponsored WIPP exercise, a report documenting the exercise and its evaluation will be prepared and distributed to the Technical Advisory Group. Semi-annual meetings of the Technical Advisory Group will be used as a forum to discuss relevant findings and recommendations for enhancement of the states' emergency

medical response capability. Areas identified for improvement will then be addressed and incorporated in biennial revisions of the *Action Plan*.

Table 6: Medical Preparedness

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Documents	Responsible for Updates	Status
<i>Documents included in Guide</i>		
<i>Regional Medical Preparedness Action Plan</i> (Revision 6), WGA Technical Advisory Group, December 2007. (Contained in Appendix Two of the Assessment).	WGA Technical Advisory Group	Final
<i>Reference material</i>		
<i>Initial WIPP Transportation Corridor Regional Medical Preparedness Assessment</i> , Prince and Associates, Denver, Colorado, June 1993.	WGA	Final
<i>Report of the Governor's WIPP Emergency Response Medical Training Advisory Committee</i> , New Mexico Department of Health/Emergency Medical Services Bureau, Santa Fe, New Mexico, September 1994.	NM	Final
<i>Hospital Emergency Response for Radiation Injuries and the Contaminated Patient</i> , training materials, Radiation Management Consultants, Inc.	RMC	Final
<i>WIPP Transportation Incident Emergency Medical Response Guide</i> , New Mexico Department of Health/Emergency Medical Services Bureau, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1998.	NM	Final