

businesses—to WS Atkins, a global design, engineering, and project management consultancy firm based in the United Kingdom, for \$318 million. Pursuant to the agreement, Atkins will hire approximately 650 EnergySolutions employees. EnergySolutions will retain its logistics, processing, and disposal business; its reactor decommissioning business, including the current projects at Zion, Ill., and LaCrosse, Wis.; and its North American utility services, including liquid waste processing, fuel pool services, and other projects. The sale is expected to close in the first quarter of 2016.

## WIPP Updates

Settlement agreements related to the February 2014 incidents at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad, N.M., have been signed by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) and the Department of Energy and its contractors, the DOE announced on January 22. The settlement agreements resolve NMED's claims against the DOE and its contractors related to incidents at WIPP and the associated waste packaging issues at Los Alamos National Laboratory. The agreements provide funding and scheduling parameters for environmental projects and infrastructure improvements in the Carlsbad and Los Alamos communities. Included in the \$74-million settlement is \$34

million to help the N.M. Department of Transportation make repairs to state roads used for the transportation of transuranic waste to WIPP. Improvements to WIPP's emergency response capabilities will also be made. The finalized settlement agreements are based on the general principles of agreement signed by the state of New Mexico and the DOE in April 2015.

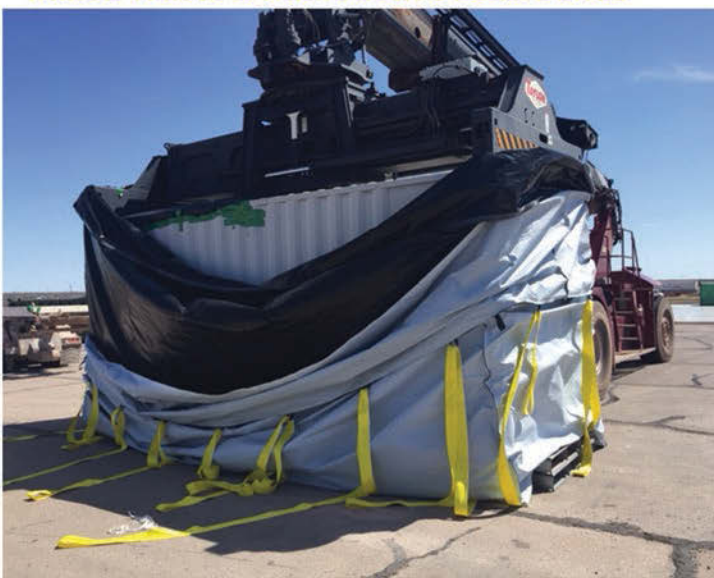
- The Department of Energy announced on January 21 that its Carlsbad Field Office has approved a new integrated performance measurement baseline for WIPP that puts the initial resumption of waste emplacement operations in December 2016. According to the DOE, the new performance measurement baseline considers potential risks that could have an impact on the project and adds appropriate contingency to the schedule to help ensure that activities can be conducted safely.

- Respiratory protection requirements were lifted for a significant portion of the WIPP underground as a result of radiological risk mitigation efforts by WIPP radiological control teams, it was announced on January 29. The change in respiratory protection requirements applies to all areas south of S-2520 and represents a milestone in the contamination mitigation efforts, according to the DOE. While the use of protective clothing, booties, and gloves will still be required in the decontaminated areas, eliminating the need for powered air-purifying respirators is expected to reduce physical stress on employees working there and will make performance of work activities easier and safer.

Airborne radioactivity levels in the south end of the

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