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## New boss to take over waste cleanup

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By Andy Lenderman

April 20, 2007

LOS ALAMOS -- Sue Stiger has faced big cleanup jobs before, and now she's been drafted to help out at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Stiger has worked for Bechtel National for the last nine years, including a stint as a cleanup manager at Idaho National Engineering Laboratory. She comes to Los Alamos later this month to take over as the associate director for environmental programs, which oversees an effort to deal with roughly 700 contaminated sites on lab property. The cost to clean up that leftover Cold War waste has been pegged at \$1 billion by lab officials.

Stiger inherits about 400 employees and a 2015 deadline enforced by the New Mexico Environment Department to clean up that waste.

Stiger said she's had a broad range of assignments before.

"Although it can look very challenging, it is possible to get cleanup accomplished on those kinds of schedules," she said in an interview.

One noteworthy accomplishment on Stiger's list is that while in Idaho, she led a team that shipped about 15,000 drums of transuranic waste to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant almost two years ahead of schedule.

Stiger also has experience at Rocky Flats, a former plutonium pit manufacturing facility in Colorado, from 1993-95. She's also worked at Oak Ridge, Tenn., where another U.S. Department of Energy site is located.

She's a civil engineer by training and received her education at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Stiger replaces Andy Phelps, who asked to be reassigned earlier this year.

The New Mexico Environment Department fined the lab several times in the past year over perceived violations of the consent order, or legal agreement, that governs the cleanup plan for the lab.

"I recognize that there's some room for improvement in the relationship with the regulators," Stiger said. Improving trust and respect is important to her, she added.

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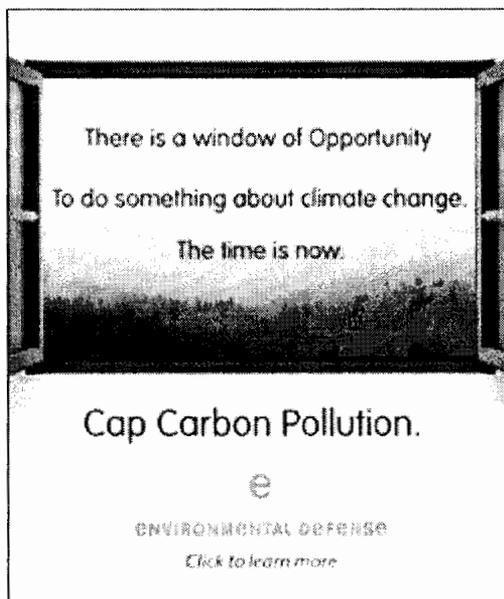
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Environment Secretary Ron Curry said he's hopeful about Stiger aggressively pursuing the consent order requirements.

"We will know within 90 days whether she is successful in that approach," Curry said. "We expect the lab to fulfill the promise it made to the citizens of New Mexico to complete a comprehensive environmental cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory."

Contact Andy Lenderman at 995-3827.

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