

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
CARLSBAD AREA OFFICE
WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT
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CARLSBAD, NEW MEXICO 88221

DOENEWS:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WESTINGHOUSE NAMED MINE 'OPERATOR OF THE YEAR'

CARLSBAD, N. M., Jan. 10 – Westinghouse Electric Corporation's Waste Isolation Division (WID) has again been selected by the New Mexico Mining Association and the N.M. State Inspector of Mines "Operator of the Year" for its safe operation of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP).

Presented to Westinghouse for the eighth consecutive year, the award came in the underground operation category for large nonproducing mines. "Operator of the Year" is awarded to producing and nonproducing mines with the lowest injury rates. The Pittsburgh-based company is the management and operating contractor for the DOE's Carlsbad Area Office, which administers the WIPP operation.

"It's a pleasure for me to participate in the recognition of Westinghouse's outstanding safety at and operation of the WIPP, " said George Dials, manager of the Carlsbad Area Office.

Dials explained that the continued safe operation of the facility is important to the Department in its preparation to open the WIPP as a nuclear waste repository in 1998.

"Safety is the number one priority in everything we do," said Carl Cox, WID general manager. "We are proud of our safety record and will continue to maintain safety programs as our top priority."

The "Operator of the Year" honor continues a string of safety awards Westinghouse has received including, most recently, selection as the first government contractor to receive "Star" status under the Department's Voluntary Protection Program (VPP).

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Barbara
Steve Z
WIPP file
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Westinghouse Named Mine
'Operator of the Year'

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The VPP is a national program established by the DOE in 1993 to recognize superior performance in the field of safety and health by contractor management and their employees. "Star" status is the highest level that can be achieved under VPP guidelines. The WIPP's "Blue Team" also won the 1994 National Mine Rescue Championship.

"The DOE and Westinghouse continue to operate the WIPP as the safest mine in the state," said State Mining Inspector Desi Apodaca, who visited the WIPP today. "It is my pleasure to present this award to the WIPP for the eighth straight year."

The WIPP is a research and development facility designed to demonstrate the safe, permanent disposal of transuranic radioactive waste left from the production of nuclear weapons. Located 26 miles east of Carlsbad, project facilities include excavated rooms 2,150 feet below the earth's surface in ancient bedded salt rock.

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Start of Press release

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