

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
CARLSBAD AREA OFFICE
WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT
P. O. BOX 3090
CARLSBAD, NEW MEXICO 88221

To Be Site

DOENEWS:

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For Immediate Release

Westinghouse, DOE to Serve as Mentors for Arizona Mining Company

CARLSBAD, N.M., April 3 -- An Arizona mining company will enter into a first-of-a-kind agreement with Westinghouse Waste Isolation Division, the primary contractor for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Carlsbad Area Office.

The Cyprus Miami Mining Corporation, located 85 miles east of Phoenix, Ariz., will receive technical assistance under a mentoring agreement to be signed with Westinghouse and the DOE on April 4, 1996. This will be the first time a DOE project has been named by the Voluntary Protection Program Participants Association (VPPPA) to mentor a commercial industry in safety.

The Westinghouse Electric Corporation's Waste Isolation Division received the prestigious DOE-VPP "star" status designation, October 3, 1994. When a site receives "star" status, it designates that its employees and management have embraced a total safety program that exceeds all industry and government standards.

The Cyprus Miami Mining Corporation is preparing an application to OSHA for a VPP designation. The company is expected to submit its application in June, followed by an OSHA on-site review. In support of the VPP application process, an applicant receives assistance from a similar industry that has received "star" status.

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The Westinghouse Waste Isolation Division manages and operates the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) for the DOE. The WIPP is designed to permanently dispose of transuranic radioactive waste left from the research and production of nuclear weapons. Located in southeastern New Mexico, 26 miles east of Carlsbad, project facilities include disposal rooms excavated in an ancient, stable salt formation, 2,150 feet (almost half a mile) underground. Transuranic waste consists of clothing, tools, rags, and other disposable items contaminated with trace amounts of radioactive elements, mostly plutonium.

A delegation of senior executives and hourly workers from both Cyprus Miami and its parent corporation, Cyprus Amax, will visit the WIPP on April 4, 1996, to sign an agreement and kick off the mentoring activities.

Cyprus representatives will spend time with WIPP personnel to learn how the VPP safety culture works. In addition, WIPP workers and managers will share past experiences, including the application process and the week-long OSHA onsite inspection.

Cyprus Miami Mining Corporation is a copper mining and processing operation that has received international recognition for its environmental reclamation successes and its total quality management programs.

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