

U.S. Department of Energy
Carlsbad Field Office
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 27, 2000

Department of Energy Competitively Awards Carlsbad Technical Assistance Contract

Carlsbad, N.M., November 27, 2000 -- The Department of Energy today announced the selection of Portage Environmental, Inc., for a \$28,810,748, five-year contract for technical assistance for the Carlsbad Field Office in Carlsbad, New Mexico. Portage Environmental, Inc., based in Idaho Falls, Idaho, has already opened an office in Carlsbad, NM.

“We have been able to find excellent support and outstanding experience through open competition,” said Dr. Inés Triay, Manager of the Carlsbad Field Office. “After a meticulous process for selection, we are pleased with the outcome.”

The solicitation for the contract was issued in May 2000 and was set aside for qualified small business firms. Seven small business companies submitted proposals to DOE in response to that solicitation. The contract defines services for expert regulatory and technical support in regulatory oversight, quality assurance, safety, and environmental compliance associated with transuranic nuclear waste transportation and disposal.

Commodore Advanced Sciences, Inc., is the current contractor for providing technical assistance to the Carlsbad Field Office under a five-year contract awarded in 1995. The transition of the performance from Commodore Advanced Science, Inc., to Portage Environmental, Inc., should be completed by the end of December 2000.

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The Carlsbad technical assistance contract supports the Carlsbad Field Office's transuranic waste program. Activities associated with the new contract include (1) assisting the Carlsbad Field Office with designing and establishing a regulatory oversight unit, performing audits, assessments and independent oversight of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) and other DOE sites; (2) assisting with safety oversight including the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) requirements; (3) assisting with environmental compliance of the WIPP Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) part B permit, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other environmental laws; and (4) assisting with the Carlsbad Field Office's performance demonstration program.

Since opening March 26, 1999, WIPP has permanently disposed of defense-generated transuranic radioactive waste left from the research and production of nuclear weapons and helped the department meet its commitment to environmental cleanup. Transuranic waste consists of clothing, tools, rags, debris, residues, and other disposable items contaminated with radioactive elements, mostly plutonium.

Located in southeastern New Mexico, 26 miles east of Carlsbad, WIPP employs approximately 1,000 people. WIPP project facilities include disposal rooms excavated in an ancient, stable salt formation nearly one-half mile underground. For more information about WIPP, call 1-800-336-9477, or visit the WIPP Web site at www.wipp.carlsbad.nm.us.