

Westinghouse Government Environmental Services Company
Waste Isolation Division
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant
P.O. Box 2078
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221



Westinghouse News

Media Contact

Robert St. John
(505) 234-7348
1-800-493-9768

<http://www.wipp.carlsbad.nm.us>

For Immediate Release

Westinghouse Earns Mine Safety Award For Exceptional Underground Operations

CARLSBAD, N.M., October 5, 2000 - For the 14th consecutive year, the Westinghouse Waste Isolation Division (WID) has been recognized for "excellence in underground operations" at the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP).

On September 19, New Mexico State Inspector of Mines Gilbert Miera and the New Mexico Mining Association presented Westinghouse with the "Mine Operator of the Year" award. The presentation took place at the New Mexico Mining Association's annual convention in Farmington.

The "Mine Operator of the Year" award recognizes Westinghouse's close attention to safety in a mining environment. WID received the award in the category of "non-producing mines." A non-producing mine is one that does not mine a product for profit.

Westinghouse is the management and operating contractor for DOE at WIPP.

WIPP, a cornerstone of the DOE's cleanup effort, is designed to permanently dispose of defense-generated transuranic radioactive waste left from the research and production of nuclear weapons.

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Located in Southeast New Mexico, 26 miles east of Carlsbad, project facilities include disposal rooms excavated in an ancient, stable salt formation 2,150 feet (almost one-half mile) underground. Waste disposal operations began at WIPP March 26, 1999.

Transuranic waste consists of clothing, tools, rags, debris, residues, and other disposable items contaminated with radioactive elements, mostly plutonium.

For more information about WIPP, call 1-800-336-9477, or visit the WIPP Web site at <http://www.wipp.carlsbad.nm.us>.