

DOENews

DOE Announces WIPP Contract Negotiations

CARLSBAD, N.M., October 12, 2004 – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced it will open a 45-day window to negotiate terms and conditions to exercise the 5-year option on the current Washington TRU Solutions, LLC (WTS) contract at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in Carlsbad, NM. The current contract period expires on September 30, 2005 and was last competitively bid in 2000.

The Department believes the performance by WTS has been good in the area of safety, operations, and waste disposal. The Department's objective in the negotiations would be to establish terms and conditions for the option period that would be as good, or better, than would be obtained through competition.

The Department will announce its negotiations team and schedule in the coming days. WTS will name its team as well. The Department looks forward to the negotiations to bring value to the United States taxpayer, the DOE, and the Carlsbad area.

WIPP, a cornerstone of DOE's cleanup effort, is the world's first repository for the permanent disposal of defense-generated transuranic radioactive waste left from research and production of nuclear weapons.

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