

Waste Isolation Pilot Plant  
P.O. Box 2078  
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# TRU Solutions News

**For Immediate Release**

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## **HUBZone, Great Opportunity for Small Businesses**

**CARLSBAD, N.M., March 25, 2003** – To help the region's small businesses attract federal and state work, Washington TRU Solutions LLC (WTS) will offer a Small Business Fair on May 2 in Carlsbad to introduce the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) HUBZone concept and other socioeconomic programs. WTS is the prime contractor for the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP).

A HUBZone (Historically Underutilized Business Zone) is a geographic area designated by the SBA as economically depressed based on a ratio of population versus business volume in the area. What that means for regional businesses that qualify is an enhanced opportunity to participate in state and federal government contracts they might not ordinarily be considered for.

Significant procurement dollars are spent in New Mexico each year by such federal agencies as the U.S. Air Force, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Sandia National Laboratories and the Department of Energy. The SBA requires federal agencies and prime contractors to meet procurement goals in each small business category which includes small business, woman-owned and minority-owned small business, veteran and/or disabled veteran-owned small business, as well as HUBZone-certified suppliers.

The government and its contractors continually seek eligible firms that qualify under preferential, and in some instances, non-competitive award programs allowed by federal regulations. The key for small business is to be prepared and eligible for these programs.

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WTS Procurement Manager Jose Legarreta explained, "We want to help suppliers because suppliers help us meet DOE needs at WIPP. We spend 40 percent of our procurement dollars in southeastern New Mexico, so a strong supplier base is vital to us. We hope to provide the instruction, education and tools needed by small businesses to effectively participate in federal and socioeconomic programs."

Representatives of WTS Procurement, business development agencies and local universities say plans to hold the May 2 Small Business Fair are tentative and depend on the interest shown by business owners in Lea, Eddy, Chaves, Roosevelt and Curry counties.

"This is a real opportunity created by our government to benefit the small business community," said John Knoll, WTS Contracts, Procurement and Property Manager. "The time and effort small business owners put into the application process is well worth the potential dividends."

Business owners interested in attending the Small Business Fair may contact Bob Prentiss, WTS Small Business Program Manager, at (505) 234-8223.