

The logo for DOE NEWS. The word "DOE" is in a large, blue, serif font, and "NEWS" is in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font. Above the "DOE" text are several horizontal blue lines, suggesting a document or a list.

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**ATL FIRST SMALL BUSINESS CONTRACTOR  
IN DOE COMPLEX TO RECEIVE VPP STAR STATUS**

The U.S. Department of Energy today awarded Advanced Technologies and Laboratories International, Inc. (ATL), a prime contractor to DOE's Office of River Protection, the agency's Voluntary Protection Program's STAR status recognition, marking the first time a DOE small business prime contractor has received the recognition. The VPP STAR award is the highest level of recognition available in DOE's safety program.

The DOE VPP promotes safety and health excellence through cooperative efforts among labor, management, and government at DOE sites across the nation.

"The dedication of partners, such as ATL, in providing a safety conscious work environment is key to accomplishing Hanford's cleanup mission," said Brad Davy, Director, DOE Office of Worker Safety and Health Assistance. "It is noteworthy that the DOE assessment team only identified a single opportunity for improvement. This is a level of performance rarely achieved during a DOE-VPP onsite assessment, and the staff at ATL should be very proud of its accomplishment. We encourage you to continue your efforts to pursue excellence in safety performance."

ATL provides analytical services at Hanford's 222-S Laboratory, critical support for Hanford tank waste cleanup and other Hanford Site cleanup activities, receiving, analyzing and reporting results of about 25,000 inorganic, organic and radionuclide analyses. The analyses are performed on approximately 3,000 highly radioactive and/or hazardous samples received from multiple sources on the Hanford Site.

"I'm very proud to lead a team of contractors, with the addition of ATL as the first small business prime contractor, who demonstrate their commitment and leadership to working safely," DOE ORP Manager Shirley Olinger. "I congratulate every member of the ATL team for reaching this goal."

In January, a team of DOE Headquarters (DOE-HQ) safety and health experts performed a two week onsite evaluation of ATL's work practices and interviewed employees and managers to assess their

overall knowledge of VPP processes. The team inspected work areas and observed laboratory analytical and testing work with mid- to high level radioactive samples from Hanford tanks, evaporators, cleanup projects, industrial hygiene, and other sample media. That assessment resulted in a recommendation to award ATL VPP STAR status.

“Working in a laboratory with high level nuclear materials poses unique safety concerns and process challenges that must be considered at all times,” said ATL Manager Dr. Jou Hwang. “I am proud to recognize the accomplishment of our team and staff today for not only receiving this recognition, but as the first small business contractor in DOE to receive this recognition. Achieving STAR Status represents a significant accomplishment that reflects the commitment of ATL staff and management to the overall safety, health, quality, and wellbeing of our workforce.”

ATL joins an elite group of DOE contractors who have achieved VPP STAR status. Among 32 VPP sites recognized by DOE across the nation, at Hanford ATL is recognized for its quality performance among eight Fluor Hanford sites, two CH2M HILL Hanford Sites, Washington Closure Hanford, and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

In 2005, ATL received the first DOE small business prime contract at Hanford as the Analytical Services Production Contractor providing analytical and testing services at the 222-S Laboratory at Hanford.

DOE initiated VPP in January 1994. The program also includes coverage of radiation protection/nuclear safety and emergency management because of the type and complexity of DOE facilities. Similar to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's VPP program, DOE VPP provides several proven benefits to participating sites, including improved labor/management relations, reduced workplace injuries and illnesses, increased employee involvement, improved morale, reduced absenteeism, and public recognition. DOE has also formed partnerships with other Federal agencies and the private sector for both advancing and sharing its VPP experiences and preparing for program challenges in the next century.

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