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News Release

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers set to supply emergency drinking water nationwide and beyond

By Penny Schmitt

WILMINGTON, NC—Rapid delivery of bottled water is a critical need when major disasters and emergencies strike. On July 27, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District, signed a contract with International American Products, Inc. (IAP) to deliver bottled water anywhere within the 48 continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands.

Now, when the President of the United States declares a national disaster area or emergency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency goes into action and tasks the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Corps' 41 Districts have a single contract they can tap to deliver water to hard-hit areas.

"This is a requirements contract," said Sherrel Bunn, Chief of Contracting Division for the Wilmington District. "We negotiated and awarded fixed unit prices for all bottled drinking water delivered. When there's an emergency, a Delivery Order can be issued against the contract by any of our U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Districts nationwide. Each order will specify the line items to be ordered and delivered, the delivery site address, and a date and time for delivery."

The contract's base period runs from July 27, 1999 to May 31, 2000, with two option years to extend through May 31, 2002.

Wilmington District has been designated as one of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Water Planning and Response Teams. Last year, the District supplied more than 11 million gallons of bottled water to Puerto Rico and other areas damaged by Hurricane Georges. "We moved to the requirements contract in order to further simplify and speed the delivery process," said Emergency Operations Manager Joel Hendrix. "We found it's best to leave it to the supplier to determine methods of delivery and transportation. We just order the water for a location."

Several other Corps Districts have contributed to the process of writing and negotiating the contract. "This has been a superb team effort," said Wilmington District Commander, Colonel Jim

DeLony. “We had help from six other Water Planning and Response Teams, including teams from Little Rock, Vicksburg, San Francisco, New England, Kansas City, and Chicago Districts. They all reviewed the proposed contract, and representatives from Vicksburg District and Kansas City District served on the Source Selection Team.” Copies of the contract will be printed and mailed to all U.S. Army Corps of Engineer Districts.

The six-month long effort included developing a scope of work, contract specification, evaluation criteria, legal review, evaluation of proposals, and final award. “It took lots and lots of hours to craft the specifications and get us to the signature date,” said Hendrix. “Now we’re happy we can say to all our Districts and the public that we have an emergency supplier ready to serve us all—come drink at the well!”

For information about the contract, contact Sherrel S. Bunn, Chief Contracting Division, Wilmington District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Phone: (910) 251-4866.

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