Los Alamos National Laboratory sponsors Hazmat Challenge

July 27, 2009

Competition test skills of hazardous materials response teams

Los Alamos, New Mexico, July 27, 2009—Seven hazardous materials response teams from New Mexico and Oklahoma will test their skills at the 13th annual Hazmat Challenge July 28-31 sponsored by Los Alamos National Laboratory. The challenge provides hazardous materials responders the opportunity to network and learn new techniques under realistic conditions in a safe environment.

Held at the Laboratory's Technical Area 49, the event challenges participants to respond to simulated hazardous materials emergencies involving a rail car, a clandestine laboratory, transportation and industrial piping scenarios, a simulated

radiological release, and responding to an emergency in a confined space, said Chris Rittner of the Laboratory's Emergency Operations Division. The finale of the Hazmat Challenge is an obstacle course; teams are graded and earn points based on their response skills.

The Laboratory began the Hazmat Challenge in 1996 as a way to hone the skills of its own members. The competition now offers a training opportunity for other New Mexico and regional hazardous materials response teams. Winning teams receive a plaque.

A brief video about the 2008 Hazmat Challenge is on the Laboratory's Web site and is one of the more popular shows on the Lab's YouTube channel.For more information on this year's challenge, contact either Rittner at crittner@lanl.gov or Andrea Romero at adromero@lanl.gov by e-mail

Editor's Note: News media representatives interested in attending the Hazmat Challenge can contact the Communications Office at 505-667-7000 to coordinate travel to the site.