



Johnson Space Center

White Sands Test Facility

Award-winning test facility

White Sands Test Facility, located in New Mexico, was selected in 1962 by NASA Headquarters and was known as the Apollo site until 1965. White Sands Test Facility is a satellite of NASA Johnson Space Center. In 1964, the first rocket engine was test fired. Since then, the test facility has supported the Apollo, Viking Lander, Cassini, space shuttle, International Space Station and other NASA programs. White Sands Space Harbor, operated by White Sands, supports astronaut space shuttle training and is the alternate landing site for both Kennedy Space Center and Edwards Air

Force Base.

A self-contained facility with medical, fire and hazardous rescue personnel, White Sands Test Facility supports other governmental agencies, including the Department of Defense, the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Air Force, with materials and propulsion testing. The test facility conducts training on hazardous fuels throughout the U.S. and abroad and also produces technical papers and reports. Materials testing for NASA has been conducted since the Apollo Program. The mission of WSTF is to be the preeminent resource for testing and evaluating potentially hazardous materials, spaceflight components, and rocket propulsion systems. Its objectives are to return the space shuttle to flight, help complete the assembly of the International Space Station, develop the Crew Exploration Vehicle, return humans to the moon, and pursue human exploration of Mars and the solar system. We are accomplishing this mission as well as inspiring the next generation of explorers with an active educational outreach program.



Water-cooled probes measure exhaust characteristics of 100 lbf attitude control thruster.

Awards and Recognition

NASA and all contractors are Occupational Safety and Health Administration Voluntary Protection Program Stars. White Sands Test Facility was the first NASA site to receive the ISO-9001 (Quality

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Management System) and the 14001 (Environmental Management System) certifications. This test facility won the 2004 Stratospheric Ozone Award with its reduction of CFC-113 use to zero. White Sands has been recognized with the Green Zia Award by the New Mexico Environment Department for 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004.

White Sands Test Facility continues its contribution to America's Space Program, through its work on the oxygen rechargeable compressor assembly and its development of a gold-salt hydrazine detector for the International Space Station and space shuttle daily operations.

Return to Flight

Today, the test facility is a natural choice to support NASA's Vision for Space Exploration, which includes returning the space shuttle safely to flight as one of its stepping-stones.

Through the experience and technology readiness of its employees and facility, White Sands sustains a leadership role in low-velocity impact testing and hypervelocity micrometeoroid testing. White Sands Test Facility maintains and operates the space shuttle fleet leader orbital maneuvering system/reaction control subsystem and improved auxiliary power unit propulsion test articles, and performs space shuttle orbital maneuvering system/reaction control subsystem component maintenance and repair at the flight hardware depot.

To learn more about White Sands Test Facility, visit us on the Web at

www.nasa.gov