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MMS Recognizes Companies for Safety Excellence in the Gulf of Mexico

The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has announced the winners of its 2003 District Safety Award for Excellence (SAFE) honors in the Gulf of Mexico. The SAFE Program recognizes and commends those operating companies that expend extra effort and conduct their operations in a safe and pollution-free manner, adhering to all regulatory requirements, employing trained and motivated personnel, and taking extra steps to enhance the safety of operations and environmental protection.

In naming this year's winners, MMS Regional Director Chris Oynes, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, said "The winners of the District SAFE Awards have set very high standards for safety by their technical accomplishments and commitment to protection of the environment while conducting Federal offshore oil and natural gas operations." The 2003 SAFE award winners for each MMS District are the following:

DISTRICT	HIGH ACTIVITY	MODERATE ACTIVITY	DRILLING	CONTRACTOR
New Orleans	Energy Partners, Ltd.	Taylor Energy Company	Helmerich & Payne International Drilling Company	
Houma	Chevron Texaco		Pride Offshore Inc.	Baker Energy
Lafayette	Devon Energy Corporation	EOG Resources, Inc.	GLOBALSANTAFE	Danos & Curole Marine Contractors, LLC
Lake Charles	Devon Energy Production Company, L.P.	Energy Resource Technology, Inc.	ENSCO International Company	Wood Group Production Services

Each company will receive a certificate from MMS Regional Director Chris Oynes. "Sound safety procedures and practices are as important as maintaining environmental integrity," said Oynes. "These industry leaders are setting standards for others to match. Their overall performance demonstrates that we can produce offshore energy resources in a safe manner while protecting and respecting environmental concerns."

MMS and the companies that lease OCS lands are very proud of the safety record for offshore oil and natural gas exploration, development, production, and shipment-to-shore operations. "Our OCS development record has been one of safe and environmentally clean operations. The MMS has regulations in place that, along with new technologies employed by industry, have created a safe production record," said Oynes.

The Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Lands Act as amended charges MMS with the responsibility of inspecting offshore oil and gas operations. Through the MMS Offshore Inspection Program, offshore activities of oil and gas operators are inspected on a continuing basis, and enforcement actions are taken when MMS regulatory requirements are not met. Increased emphasis by MMS on enforcement actions to promote proper operating procedures has led to even better safety records.

The SAFE award program was established by MMS in 1983 to recognize and honor companies that make a concerted effort to train and motivate their employees to conduct offshore operations in a safe and environmentally responsible manner. The agency recognizes both high OCS activity and moderate OCS activity categories for production. Moderate activities are generally from a non-integrated, non-affiliated company. Drilling and production contractors with exemplary OCS performance are also recognized. Winners are selected by each District office.

The Minerals Management Service is the federal agency in the U.S. Department of the Interior that manages the nation's oil, natural gas, and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf in Federal offshore waters. The agency also collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and American Indian lands. MMS disbursed more than \$8 billion in FY 2003 and more than \$135 billion since the agency was created in 1982. Nearly \$1 billion from those revenues go into the Land and Water Conservation Fund annually for the acquisition and development of state and Federal park and recreation lands.

MMS Main Website: www.mms.gov
Gulf of Mexico Website: www.gomr.mms.gov

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