



**ADDRESSING THE SMALL BUSINESS  
BARRIERS IN CONTRACTING WITH  
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**



AN SBA-CERTIFIED 8(A)SDB



## ADDRESSING THE SMALL BUSINESS BARRIERS IN CONTRACTING WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### **Wastren Advantage, Inc. Overview**

- **SBA 8(a) Certified Small Disadvantaged Business**
- **Incorporated in 1989 in Idaho; Changed ownership in 2006 under name Wastren Advantage, Inc. (WAI); Moved headquarters to Piketon, Ohio**
- **In 2010 won two multiple-year cost plus award fee prime (CPAF) contracts under DOE**
- **Provide Remediation, Waste Management and Facility Operations Services. Recently acquired a patented recycling technology and 50,000 ft<sup>2</sup> plant.**





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### Background

- **Focused on larger prime contracts in the areas of:**
  - Remediation
  - Waste Management
  - Facility Support Services
- **Looked at CPAF or Fixed Price Contracts**
- **Did not look at Technical Support or Staff Augmentation Contracts**



**Why are some Small Businesses less successful?**



## Observations

There are three main areas of difficulty in performance (Same problems most large businesses have on challenging projects)

### 1. Changing Site Conditions

- Waste Volumes
- Characterization Data Incomplete
- Changing Regulatory Requirements

*(Slow to recognize the changes and document them)*

### 2. Key Personnel or Subject Matter Expert Needs

- Item 1 often results in a skill set that may be needed that was not part of the initial proposed team

*(Small businesses can have more difficulty quickly bringing these resources to bear in a project)*





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### 3. Change Control/DOE 0413 Compliance

- **Item 1 typically results in significant changes to the baseline**

*(Small businesses can struggle communicating changes to the necessary levels of DOE)*



### Summary Observation

#### Prime Contractor vs. Subcontractor to Large Business Prime Contractor

- **There is significant difference between these two contracting positions.**
- **Corporate infrastructure requirements for prime contractors become a negative cost discriminator for some subcontract opportunities**



## Conclusions

- **Know where you want to be and make sure you have aligned your systems and processes to maximize your capabilities.**
- **Try to avoid the urge to overextend. It is usually feast or famine with contracting opportunities. More planning and targeted proposals will normally provide better results. DOE can help with better communication of future small business opportunities.**



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# Questions?

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