

News Release

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South Georgia Gets New Public Health Lab With Latest Equipment and High Level of Testing Capacity

*Waycross lab intended to mimic exterior and interior design
of the award-winning Atlanta-area lab*

Waycross, Ga., Nov. 6, 2007 – Public health laboratorians in south Georgia have moved into a new facility that serves the area with modern testing equipment and provides surge capacity for the State's larger Georgia Public Health Laboratory in metro Atlanta's city of Decatur.

The new Georgia Public Health Laboratory in Waycross was designed by Lord, Aeck & Sargent, the architecture firm that designed the award-winning Decatur facility. That building was *R&D Magazine's* 1998 Laboratory of the Year and recipient of the American Institute of Architects Georgia 2001 Award for Architectural Excellence. By intent, the Waycross building is a smaller "sister" lab to the Decatur facility.

"Though not as big, the Waycross and Decatur labs are very much alike in both physical appearance and internal design," said Karl Hoenes, the Georgia Public Health Laboratory project manager who worked closely with Lord, Aeck & Sargent and the project team during the planning, design and construction of both laboratory buildings. "We planned this specifically so

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that if the Decatur facility were to become non-functional for any reason, we could easily move our people and equipment into comparable space and pick up our testing with minimal retraining time.”

Some interior similarities between the two buildings include the disposition of offices to laboratory spaces, the configuration of laboratories, and the relationship of support spaces to laboratories. The exteriors of both buildings use similar materials.

“The building brings a high level of testing capacity to south Georgia,” Hoenes added. “Our previous space, which was part of a district health office facility, didn’t have the safety equipment appropriate for the level of testing that we need in this part of the state.”

The \$11.1 million, 23,840-square-foot Waycross facility is a one-story structure sited on land donated to the State of Georgia by the Waycross-Ware County Development Authority. The building serves as the highly visible cornerstone of a new industrial/business office park, and Development Authority officials anticipate that it will serve as an economic development magnet, attracting high-tech and other business to the area.

The Waycross facility houses two BSL-3 laboratory suites for specified testing of chemical and biological threat specimens. The suites include the latest technologies for laboratory and environmental safety to protect people inside and outside the laboratories. Among these technologies are the abilities to filter exhaust air from the facility and to continuously decontaminate all of the labs’ wastewater so that it is completely clean. The building also incorporates all of the latest technologies for guarding against intrusion or abnormal events.

In addition to the chemical and biological terrorism laboratory suites, the Waycross facility includes laboratory production space, a mail screening area, an “unknowns” room for examination of potentially hazardous deliveries, a training classroom, a training lab, offices and conference room space.

Architectural Design

Described by Hoenes as “architecturally stunning,” the building’s exterior is clad in salvaged granite tombstone, brown painted steel shingles and glass. The entry lobby area includes an 18-inch granite base above which is an expansive storefront glazing system that reaches almost to the metal roof.

“We oriented the building to maximize the amount of light while at the same time to block unwanted heat gain,” said Warren Williams, Lord, Aeck & Sargent principal in charge of the Waycross project. “The design brings natural light into the building through the storefront glazing system in front. The offices on the west perimeter have clerestory windows, which carry light into the interior laboratories.”

Williams noted that the site also was designed to minimize storm water runoff. “We minimized impervious surfaces and created two rainwater detention ponds, one in front of the building and another in the parking lot. These create a security buffer between the road and the building and also provide a suitable building foreground,” he said.

The Project Team

The project team for the Georgia Public Health Laboratory in Waycross comprised:

- Lord, Aeck & Sargent, Inc. (Atlanta), architect
- Newcomb & Boyd (Atlanta, Ga.), MEP/FP engineer
- KSi/Structural Engineers (Atlanta), structural engineer
- Carter & Sloope Inc. (Macon, Ga.), civil engineer and landscape architect
- Gilbane Building Co. (Atlanta), construction manager
- WorkingBuildings LLC (Atlanta), commissioning agent

About Lord, Aeck & Sargent

Lord, Aeck & Sargent is an award-winning architectural firm serving clients in scientific, academic, historic preservation, arts and cultural, and multi-family housing and mixed-use markets. The firm’s core values are responsive design, technological expertise and exceptional service. Lord, Aeck & Sargent has offices in Ann Arbor, Michigan; Atlanta; and Chapel Hill, North Carolina. For more information, visit the firm at www.lordaecksargent.com.