



Home Office
P.O. Box A-H • 16 South River Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18703-0020
Toll-Free 1-800-673-2465
www.guard.com

Date: October 29th, 2004
Contact: Bob Thomas, Communications Manager
570-825-9900, extension 6564 or e-mail bthomas@guard.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GUARD Insurance Group Among Industry Technology Awards Finalists

WILKES-BARRE – GUARD Insurance Group, a Workers' Compensation specialist based in downtown Wilkes-Barre, was recognized as a finalist for the 2004 A.M. Best E-Fusion Awards, a national program highlighting innovative uses of technology to address insurance business challenges.

GUARD's Agency Service Center, a comprehensive, feature rich, and secure web site developed by the company to allow independent agents and brokers to manage their GUARD-specific insurance business via the Internet, won finalist status in the Agent/Broker Management category. The achievement followed months of assessments by insurance industry experts who considered entries from scores of insurance carriers and technology companies across six categories as well as presentations and demonstrations performed before judges and audiences during *E-Fusion 2004: The Business of Insurance Conference* held in Baltimore, Maryland from October 17th through the 19th. The awards program and annual conference were organized and sponsored by A.M. Best Company, a leading insurance rating organization based in Oldwick, New Jersey.

Representing GUARD at the conference were: Carl J. Witkowski, L.C.S.W., Executive Vice President of Information Systems and Chief Administrative Officer; Marshall I. Kornblatt, CSP, Senior Vice President of Insurance Operations; Lisa Thompson, Internal Business Consultant; and Victor Ambruso, Senior Software Development Specialist.

According to Kornblatt, "Our agents and brokers have expressed satisfaction with the power and ease of use of our Agency Service Center. We are pleased to have an independent group of our peers recognize and validate our contributions to advancing efficiencies for insurance professionals."

Susan W. Shoval, CPCU, President of GUARD Insurance Group, adds: "Our E-Fusion achievement also recognizes that a northeastern Pennsylvania-based company can produce world-class technology that competes against large, national organizations. The list of E-Fusion competitors was a who's who of our industry."

Licensed in 41 states and the District of Columbia, GUARD Insurance Group provides Workers' Compensation coverage and a wide range of extensive customer services to more than 27,000 businesses throughout the eastern portion of the United States. For more information about GUARD or the E-Fusion program, go to www.guard.com or www.ambest.com.

30/30