

REACH



Pueblo Chemical Depot Community Outreach Office
301 North Main Street,
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Monday–Friday
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Spring 2002

Disposal Technology Decision Draws Closer

The process of determining the technology that will safely destroy Pueblo Chemical Depot's mustard agent stockpile is progressing. The four technologies being considered are:

- Baseline incineration;
- Modified baseline incineration;
- Neutralization followed by biotreatment and
- Neutralization followed by supercritical water oxidation.

The Defense Acquisition Board (DAB), which consists of high-level Department of Defense officials, reviewed all aspects of the chemical demilitarization program. The DAB review process involved several working teams that collected and reviewed information and independent assessments on the proposed technologies; identified and evaluated issues; and addressed public concern. The teams in turn provided their technology recommendation to the DAB. Each team recommended neutralization followed by biotreatment, or neut/bio, as the preferred technology.

Following a review of all data and public testimony, the DAB concurred and recommended that the Pentagon select neut/bio to destroy the mustard agent. The undersecretary of defense for acquisition, logistics and technology is authorized to make the final decision.

At press time, an environmental impact statement identifying neut/bio as the preferred technology was completed. Following a 30-day public comment period, the under secretary will determine Pueblo's final technology and sign a Record of Decision. An official, public announcement will follow.

Factors Influencing the DAB



The DAB considered the following factors in their review and technology recommendation:

- Treaty implications
- Laws and regulations
- Environmental Impact Statements
- Mission needs
- Budget
- Political concerns
- Independent assessments
- Public input

In January, the Pueblo Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) sent a letter to the DAB stating neut/bio as their technology recommendation. CAC Chair and Pueblo County Commissioner John Klomp, along with CAC member Irene Kornelly, also provided verbal comments at DAB meetings held in March.

For more information regarding the DAB process or to receive a copy of the final environmental impact statement, please contact the Pueblo Chemical Depot Community Outreach Office at (719) 549-4877.

“This is a significant milestone for chemical weapons disposal. Forty-four percent of the Utah stockpile is eliminated and more than 25 percent of the nation’s entire chemical weapons stockpile is destroyed.”

—James Bacon, program manager for chemical demilitarization

Twenty-Five Percent of U.S. Chemical Stockpile Destroyed Utah Facility Destroys GB Nerve Agent Stockpile

The U.S. Army Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization recently announced that Utah’s remaining stockpile of GB (Sarin) nerve agent was eliminated safely. Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility workers now are preparing to destroy 1,356 tons of VX nerve agent.

“This is a significant milestone for chemical weapons disposal. Forty-four percent of the Utah stockpile is eliminated and more than 25 percent of the nation’s entire chemical weapons stockpile is destroyed,” said James Bacon, program manager for chemical demilitarization. In November 2000, the Army’s Johnston Atoll facility in the Pacific Ocean completed safe destruction of its chemical stockpile.

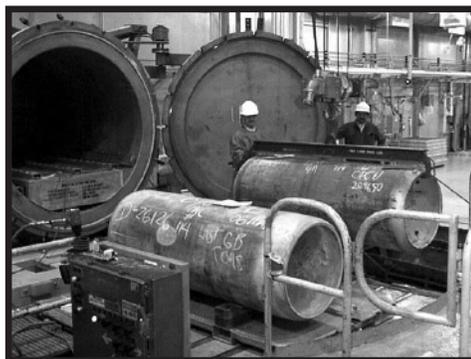
TOCDF workers destroyed the GB stockpile first because continued storage posed the greatest threat to the community. GB agent has a consistency similar to water and is more likely to vaporize than other agent types. The original GB stockpile, which was stored safely at Deseret Chemical Depot in Utah, consisted of 928,906 rockets, bombs, projectiles and bulk containers. The depot stored the Army’s largest stockpile of GB agent, more than 12 million pounds. This was twice the amount of GB stored at the nine other U.S. stockpile sites combined.

Now, the facility equipment will be decontaminated, and international treaty inspectors will certify official completion of the GB agent destruction campaign.

“We are sharing lessons learned during TOCDF’s GB destruction campaign with our other chemical

weapons disposal facilities to ensure continued safety and environmental stewardship,” said Bacon.

The Anniston Chemical Agent Disposal Facility, located in Alabama, is conducting tests in preparation for destroying its stockpile, which includes rockets filled with GB agent. The Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility, located in Oregon, also is undergoing tests to demonstrate that the facility is prepared for disposal operations to begin next year. Construction is nearly complete on Arkansas’ Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility. Technology decisions for the Colorado and Kentucky facilities are expected later this year. And, the Maryland and Indiana facilities are investigating technologies for disposal of bulk chemical agent.



The last GB bulk container being unloaded in the Unpack Area of the TOCDF.



Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations and Environment visits Pueblo

On February 26, Dr. Mario Fiori, the newly appointed head of oversight for chemical weapons disposal, visited Pueblo Chemical Depot (PCD). In December 2001, the Army transferred oversight for the Chemical Weapons Disposal Program from U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Claude Bolton, incoming assistant secretary of the army for acquisition, logistics and technology (ASA(AL&T)), to the recently appointed Dr. Mario Fiori, assistant secretary of the army for installations and environment (ASA(I&E)). The ASA(AL&T) was responsible for the overall oversight, management, direction and execution of the program, while the ASA(I&E) provided policy and oversight for the environment, safety, occupational health and chemical stockpile emergency preparedness. With this change, oversight for all aspects for the program rests with the ASA(I&E), consolidating all responsibility into one office.

Dr. Fiori also has visited the stockpile sites in Utah, Maryland, Indiana, Arkansas and Oregon and plans to visit the remaining sites in the near future. As part of his visit to Pueblo and PCD, Dr. Fiori met with the installation directorates, visited with the troops and toured PCD. Dr. Fiori explained the reason for his visit, "I wanted to meet with the Pueblo community and let them know that I support them and will be working with the community to dispose of the chemical stockpile as soon as possible. I also wanted to thank the troops that have been sent to PCD to help safeguard the stockpile."

Dr. Fiori also took time to tour the City of Pueblo and visited the Medal of Honor Memorial at the Pueblo Convention Center. Dr. Fiori then had a working lunch with Pueblo County Commissioner John Klomp. Commissioner Klomp also serves as the Chair for the Citizens Advisory Committee, which represents the greater Pueblo community on chemical weapons disposal issues.



Dr. Mario Fiori, assistant secretary of the army.

When asked what he saw as the future of the chemical demilitarization program, Dr. Fiori replied, "Because the greatest danger is in the continued storage of these weapons, it is my goal to help accelerate the disposal process in a safe and environmentally sound manner." PCD Commander John Driftmier had this observation, "We appreciate Dr. Fiori taking the time to visit PCD to better understand our mission, our plans and our concerns. The fact that he was very frank and open in sharing his thoughts on the direction he plans to take the chemical demilitarization process both here at Pueblo and at the other stockpile sites was well received."

"Because the greatest danger is in the continued storage of these weapons, it is my goal to help accelerate the disposal process in a safe and environmentally sound manner."

*—Dr. Mario Fiori,
assistant secretary
of the army*

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Community Outreach Office Relocates

The Pueblo Chemical Depot Community Outreach Office is pleased to announce that it has relocated to downtown Pueblo. The outreach office is located at the Business and Technology Center, 301 North Main Street, Suite 306B, Pueblo, CO 81003. New phone numbers to be announced.

Stop by for a visit, or plan on seeing the outreach staff at one of the community events listed below!

- **Seniors' Life Festival**—May 2 and 3, Pueblo Convention Center
- **Expo 2002**—May 14, Pueblo Convention Center
- **Colorado State Fair**—August 17—September 1, Palace of Agriculture



The outreach office has relocated to the Business and Technology Center at 3rd and Main in downtown Pueblo.

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