

REACH

Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office

Spring 2002

Community Members View Chemical Weapons Disposal Projects in Maryland

As a disposal technology decision for the Blue Grass chemical weapons stockpile draws closer, community representatives are exercising opportunities to become more informed and involved in a variety of disposal program issues. In February, seven members of the Madison County community traveled to Edgewood, Md., to view several chemical weapons projects first-hand.

Tour attendees included the following: Dr. Doug Hindman, Diane Kerby, and Amanda Stafford, all Citizens Advisory Commission (CAC) members; Mike Brewer and Bill Strong, Richmond city commissioners; and Elizabeth Crowe, Kentucky Environmental Foundation. Additionally, *Richmond Register* news reporter Luke Bradshaw participated.

Highlights of the visit included:

- A tour of the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility;
- A visit to the Chemical Transfer Facility;
- A demonstration of mustard neutralization;
- A first-hand look at an alternative technology demonstration of electrochemical oxidation;
- A tour of the Army's Chemical Demilitarization Training Facility; and
- Various briefings and question/answer opportunities.

Tour participant Mike Brewer said it was especially beneficial to learn more about chemical weapons disposal options. "We had the opportunity to see both sides, neutralization and incineration. That was the purpose of the trip," he said. "We were able to ask questions that concern scheduling and the completion of impact studies that deal with the Blue Grass Army Depot."

If you would like to learn more about the recent Maryland tour, please contact the Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office at

(859) 626-8944, or consider attending a CAC meeting. CAC meetings are typically held at 5:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month. Meeting locations vary. Call the outreach office for location information.



Blue Grass
Chemical Stockpile
Outreach Office
370 Highland Park Drive
Suite 2
Richmond, KY 40475

Outreach Office Hours
Monday–Friday
8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.
Other hours by appointment

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Richmond city commissioners, Citizens' Advisory Commission members and representatives from Blue Grass Army Depot study a tabletop model of a chemical weapons disposal facility.



Richmond City Commissioner Mike Brewer (left) discusses the destruction of M55 rockets with Bill McLay, operations manager of the Chemical Demilitarization Training Facility. The rockets shown in the photo are models.

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*—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 VX nerve agent.

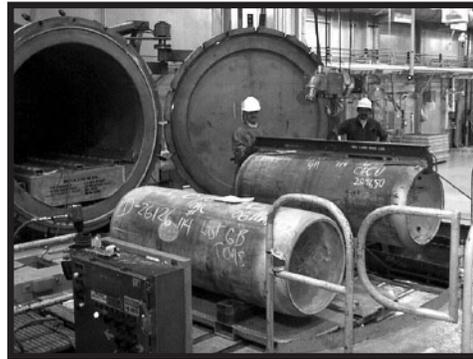
“This is a significant milestone for chemical weapons disposal. Forty-four percent of the Utah stockpile is eliminated and more than 25 percent of the nation’s entire chemical weapons stockpile is destroyed,” said James Bacon, program manager for chemical demilitarization. In November 2000, the Army’s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



Army Transfers Oversight of Chemical Demilitarization Program

Recently, the Army transferred oversight for the Chemical Weapons Disposal Program from the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASA(AL&T)), to the Assistant Secretary of the Army Installation and Environment (ASA(I&E)). This move consolidates responsibility for the program, which was previously divided between the two offices. The ASA(AL&T) was previously responsible for the overall oversight, management, direction and execution of the program, while the ASA(I&E) provided policy and oversight for environment, safety, occupational health and chemical stockpile emergency preparedness.

Dr. Mario Fiori, ASA(I&E), said of his new assignment: "I am pleased to have the opportunity to work with all interested parties to ensure the safe destruction of America's stored chemical weapons. The Army, the eight states and the communities where the stockpile is stored are firm partners in seeing this project to a successful conclusion. We will work together to achieve our goal of destroying the last chemical weapon in this country's stockpile."

Direct management of the weapons disposal program will continue to be provided by the Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization James Bacon, and be headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. Bacon currently is responsible for the safe destruction of all chemical agents and weapons stored at eight sites within the United States, as well as the disposal of recovered chemical weapons and former chemical weapons production sites.

The Office of the Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization (PMCD) was established in 1985 at the direction of Congress and given responsibility for disposal of the complete U.S. stockpile of chemical agents and munitions.



Dr. Mario Fiori, assistant secretary of the army.



In January, Maj. John Riley, commander, Blue Grass Chemical Activity, spoke with parents and teachers at Harvest Christian Academy school in Richmond. If your organization is interested in receiving a similar program update from an Army representative, please contact the Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office at (859) 626-8944.

Coming this spring...

The Department of the Army will soon release a Blue Grass Draft Environmental Impact Statement. This document will assess the potential impacts of the design, construction, operation and closure of a facility at the Blue Grass Army Depot for the destruction of chemical agent and munitions.

Watch for local advertisements regarding upcoming public meeting opportunities. To be sure that you are on the mailing list to receive program updates, please complete and return the cut-n-clip information form on the back of this newsletter.

REACH

We want to hear from you ...

The Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office serves as a clearinghouse of information about the chemical weapons stockpile stored at Blue Grass Army Depot and the Army's plans for chemical weapons disposal. The outreach office has informational materials that can address your questions or concerns.

If you would like more information about the Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office, please telephone (859) 626-8944 or complete this form and mail it to:

Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office
370 Highland Park Drive, Suite 2
Richmond, KY 40475

Would you like to be added to our mailing list?

Yes No

Would you like an information packet mailed to you?

Yes No

If you answered yes to either of these questions, please complete the following:

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

E-mail (optional) _____

The outreach office schedules speaking presentations that can be given to large or small community groups, clubs, organizations, etc. If you know of a community group that might be interested, please complete the following:

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

E-mail (optional) _____



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