

Chem-Bio News

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- 2. OBAMA SET TO REJECT 'NUCLEAR POSTURE' ON EVE OF START DEAL WITH RUSSIA:** "President Obama will rewrite America's policy on nuclear weapons next week, heralding further reductions in the US stockpile and giving a pledge not to develop new systems."
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Chem-DeMil News

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- 2. ANNISTON CHEMICAL AGENT DISPOSAL FACILITY - NEW EPA RULES NOT EXPECTED TO IMPACT ARMY DEPOT CLEANUP:** "EPA officials announced Monday they plan to tighten restrictions on four specific compounds suspected to cause cancer, including trichloroethylene (TCE), which depot cleanup crews and Anniston Water Works and Sewer Board workers have fought to keep out of the area's drinking water and ground water for decades."

CB Daily Report

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[ISRAEL] DISCHARGED SOLDIERS SUE FOR MILLIONS OVER ANTHRAX EXPERIMENT

By Vered Luvitch
YnetNews.com
March 28, 2010

“Sixty-four former IDF soldiers are suing the Defense Ministry for NIS 18 million (\$4.8 million) over what they claim is damage caused to them during Anthrax vaccine experiments in the early 1990s.

The experiments, which were meant to determine the efficacy of an Anthrax vaccine, were carried out in light of what was then defined at the time as the "strategic threat of a surprise biological attack facing Israel."

Nicknamed "Omer 2," the experiments included 716 IDF soldiers picked out of a pool of 4,000.

The lawsuit, filed with the Petah Tikva District Court, is based on the principle according to which anyone who decides to take part in an experiment must do so willingly and after considering the risks involved.

As part of the lawsuit the soldiers are demanding that the state reveal the ingredients of the serum that was given to them, in addition to NIS 300,000 (about \$80,000) in damages to each plaintiff for mental anguish and emotional distress resulting from the involuntary use of one's body and medical negligence.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3869416,00.html>

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OBAMA SET TO REJECT ‘NUCLEAR POSTURE’ ON EVE OF START DEAL WITH RUSSIA

By Michael Evans
The Telegraph (UK)
April 02, 2010

“President Obama will rewrite America’s policy on nuclear weapons next week, heralding further reductions in the US stockpile and giving a pledge not to develop new systems.

After a review of the nation’s nuclear weapons arsenal that has involved, among others, the Pentagon, the Department of Energy and the intelligence services, as well as the White House, Mr Obama is expected to reject the doctrine on nuclear weapons — the “nuclear posture” — adopted by George W. Bush, which included the possibility of the United States launching an attack on a non-nuclear state.

The Obama Administration has come under pressure from arms control analysts to redefine the circumstances in which the US might consider using nuclear weapons, and to state beyond doubt that the justification for keeping them is purely as a deterrent.”

The full article can be found at:

http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/us_and_americas/article7085041.ece

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BIOSENSORS IN BRIEFS

By Jacob Bush
Highlights in Chemical Technology
March 25, 2010

“US scientists have developed durable biosensors that can be printed directly onto clothing. This could allow continuous biomedical monitoring outside hospitals.

The expenses associated with hospital treatment have spawned a growing interest in methods for home based healthcare management. A reliable, wearable, physiological monitoring system would allow at-home physiological surveillance, which could reduce the load on hospitals. Wearable sensors would also be useful for stress and drug monitoring in sport and the military. Physical sensors that monitor blood pressure or heart rate have been integrated into clothing but little attention has been paid to wearable

chemical sensors.

Now, Joseph Wang and colleagues at the University of California San Diego, La Jolla have developed a method for printing biosensors directly onto clothing. To form the sensors, Wang screen-printed carbon electrode arrays directly onto the elastic bands of mens' underwear. The tight contact and direct exposure to the skin allows hydrogen peroxide and the enzyme NADH, which are both associated with numerous biomedical processes, to be monitored using the sensor, explains Wang.

Stresses associated with everyday wear, such as folding or stretching the clothing, did not affect the performance of the sensor, says Wang. He adds that this durability will allow many future applications of the technology."

The full article can be found at:

http://www.rsc.org/Publishing/ChemTech/Volume/2010/05/biosensors_in_briefs.asp

The original article can be found at: <http://www.rsc.org/Publishing/Journals/AN/article.asp?doi=b926339j>

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DOE MAY FACE NEW CENTRAL HANFORD CLEANUP DEADLINES

By Annette Cary
The TriCity Herald
April 01, 2010

"The Department of Energy and its regulators have tentatively agreed to changes in legal deadlines for cleanup of central Hanford and on a general framework to prepare for environmental cleanup work there.

The revised deadlines under the legally binding Tri-Party Agreement won't be adopted until the public has a chance to comment.

Under the proposed deadlines, DOE would face a tight schedule for coming up with a plan to clean up contaminated ground water in central Hanford. But DOE would have more time to come up with a plan to clean up contaminated soil deep underground."

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"A substantial amount of Hanford's focus in recent years has been on cleaning up nuclear reservation land along the Columbia River to shrink the contaminated portion of the site to 75 square miles at its center by 2015.

In February 2009, new Tri-Party Agreement deadlines were proposed that would accelerate the cleanup of ground water plumes near the Columbia River. But regulators agreed then to ease deadlines for other work.

Because of technical problems and an interest in spending cleanup money on work along the Columbia River, DOE was given more time for work in central Hanford.

At that time, DOE and its regulators also agreed to start discussions to develop a strategy to clean up central Hanford, modeling it after the strategy used for land along the river."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.tri-cityherald.com/2010/04/01/960133/doe-may-face-new-central-hanford.html>

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NATIONAL DISASTER EXERCISES, CALLED TOO COSTLY AND SCRIPTED, MAY BE SCALED BACK

By Spencer S. Hsu
The Washington Post
April 02, 2010

“The plan was to stage the nation's first live exercise that simulates a nuclear bomb being detonated by terrorists in an American city, with 10,000 emergency responders, U.S. troops and officials playing out their roles in the heart of Las Vegas.

But the Obama administration canceled the Nevada events set for next month after Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid (D-Nev.), backed by casino and business interests, said it would frighten away tourists and "unacceptably harm" the region's battered economy.

The federal government is also considering whether to scale back next year's National Level Exercise, the annual drill that for the past decade has been a cornerstone of the nation's efforts to prepare for a catastrophic terrorist attack or natural disaster. The 2011 exercise was envisioned by states as a five-day test in the Midwest for a 7.7-magnitude earthquake, but the Federal Emergency Management Agency might instead limit the event to three days and test for a milder earthquake, state and federal officials said.

The decisions are playing into a quiet debate about the future of the large-scale national exercises. Convinced that the drills are the best way to determine whether the nation is prepared for a disaster, some emergency planners and state officials say they fear that as the federal government cuts costs, it may dumb down the tests so participants will pass them more easily. Shying away from the toughest problems, they say, risks repeating the mistakes that were made after Hurricane Katrina, when an unprepared White House and Louisiana governor clashed over who was in charge, how to allocate resources and whether to send in the military.

White House officials and Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano say they are trying to improve the national exercises, not undercut them. The drills have grown into unrealistic, costly and over-scripted productions, Napolitano has said, an "elaborate game" rather than opportunities for officials to work through problems.

Since 2005, FEMA has spent \$218 million on national exercises, testing scenarios that include an outbreak of the pneumonic plague, chemical attacks and dirty bombs. After this year's nuclear scenario, which was to involve a 10-kiloton bomb, next year's would be the first to posit a natural disaster instead of a terrorist attack.

The Obama White House is also revisiting the broad homeland security system that President George W. Bush established in a series of directives in 2003, seeking to clear up confusion about who is in charge of managing the nation's preparedness and how to track progress.

That review, however, has created wide uncertainty about the administration's plans within the ranks at FEMA, the Pentagon and state emergency agencies, several officials said.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/01/AR2010040103746.html>

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CHINA STEPS UP BIOTERROR EVACUATION PLANS

By Ted Purlain
BioPrepWatch.com
April 01, 2010

“China's central government has given the task of creating an escape plan for tourists at Tianamen Square in the event of a bioterror event to Professor Liu Shuhua, deputy director of the department of atmospheric sciences at Peking University.

Conventional wisdom has said that the straight, wide boulevards on the western and eastern sides of Tianamen Square, which are one-way and five lanes wide, would be the best escape routes in the event of an emergency.

Liu and his team, however, have used modeling to show that those routes could be fatal. A southwesterly wind would blow anthrax spores to the eastern boulevard and, owing to principals of aerodynamics, the spores would remain in that area.

The study pinpointed the best times and locations for a terrorist attack in Beijing, revealing that when a northwesterly wind is blowing, the best spot for an attack would be from a car on Changan Avenue north of the Great Hall of the People. This spot would allow the toxic gas to spread quickly to a large area on the square.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.bioprepwatch.com/news/212640-china-steps-up-bioterror-evacuation-plans>

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VA TO INTENSIFY GULF WAR ILLNESS OUTREACH, CARE

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

April 01, 2010

“Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki yesterday announced promising news for veterans of the Persian Gulf War experiencing the broad range of symptoms referred to as Gulf War Illnesses.

Acting on recommendations from a task force he stood up to identify gaps in service, Shinseki said VA plans to reconnect with veterans who deployed during the Gulf War in 1990 and 1991 to ensure they get the best information and care possible.

As part of that outreach, VA’s Gulf War Veterans’ Illnesses Task Force recommended improved data-sharing with the Defense Department to notify veterans of potential exposures, monitor their long-term health and provide additional follow-up.

The task force also recommended that VA strengthen training for clinicians and claims processors so they’re better postured to diagnose, treat and process disability claims related to Gulf War Illnesses, and reenergize its research and medical surveillance efforts.

The task force’s report will redefine how VA addresses the concerns of veterans deployed during the Gulf War, Shinseki said. “Our mission at VA is to be advocates for veterans,” he said. “This report’s action plans provide a roadmap to transform the care and services we deliver to Gulf War veterans.”

The new recommendations come on the tail of a VA proposal announced last month to presume nine specific infectious diseases to be service-connected for anyone who served in Southwest Asia after Aug. 2, 1990, or in Afghanistan after Sept. 18, 2001.

That ruling, once adopted, will impact veterans who deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. It will relieve those suffering from the designated diseases from the burden of proving their ailments are linked to service in the Persian Gulf or Afghanistan to receive VA health care and disability payments.

The nine diseases are: brucellosis, *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Coxiella burnetii* (Q fever), malaria, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, nontyphoidal *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, visceral leishmaniasis (kala-azar) and West Nile virus.

During an interview with American Forces Press Service, Shinseki called the proposed ruling a positive step in taking care of Gulf War veterans suffering numerous symptoms and diagnoses yet to be pinpointed to any specific exposure.

“We can’t historically go back and decide what actually caused [Gulf War Illness],” he said. “We spent \$350 million trying to find the cause, and we haven’t arrived at a clear answer.”

Rather than simply waiting for researchers to come up with a cause-and effect solution, Shinseki pressed VA to come up with a plan to compensate affected veterans now.

“My request was, ‘Can we agree that something happened?’” he said. “We have enough evidence here, symptomatically, that something happened. It may be a combination of things. We may never be able to answer exactly what caused this.

“But we can deal with the problem,’ he said. “So let’s take care of people.”

Shinseki took a similar approach to Agent Orange, a defoliant used during the Vietnam War that many veterans blame for causing a variety of illnesses and diseases.

VA previously presumed 12 diseases to be service-connected based on Agent Orange exposure. In October, Shinseki proposed adding three more diseases to the list: hairy-cell leukemia and other B-cell leukemias, Parkinson's disease and ischemic heart disease.

Shinseki said he based his decision on a report by the National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine citing compelling new evidence of a connection between the three illnesses and Agent Orange exposure.

“That was not an independent decision by the VA,” Shinseki emphasized. “The Institute of Medicine is designated by Congress as the impartial determiner of whether or not there is sufficient evidence to make the decision like the one I made.... And they gave me enough information for me to say, ‘I can see the tie.’ So the decision was made.”

Shinseki, a former Army chief of staff and Vietnam veteran, had long criticized past practices that put the burden on veterans to prove that the variety of illnesses many suffered was linked to Agent Orange exposure. Too often, he said, this created an adversarial relationship between VA and veterans.

“It was important to clearly let the Vietnam veterans know that they have not been forgotten,” he said. “We are dealing with our responsibilities here.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=58580>

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Chem-Demil News

PINE BLUFF ARSENAL - EMERGENCY RADIOS TO BE RETRIEVED FROM ARSENAL AREA RESIDENTS

By Larry Fugate
The Pine Bluff Commercial
April 01, 2010

“Residents, schools and businesses in of portions of Jefferson and Grant counties in possession of some 10,000 tone alert radios will be asked to return the devices later this year.

The radios were provided through the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program.

At Tuesday's meeting of the Pine Bluff Arsenal Citizen's Advisory Commission on the chemical weapons

incineration, Arkansas Department of Emergency Management personnel provided a CSEPP status update on steps that will be taken after the chemical weapons stockpile is eliminated, said Karen Quarles, Jefferson County Office of Emergency Management coordinator.

The plan calls for individuals who now have tone alert radios to turn them in to drop locations.

The tone alert radios also broadcast National Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration frequencies.

Quarles said a formal request to replace the tone alert radios that are turned in with radios capable of receiving weather warnings and alerts will be submitted this week to the ADEM, adding it may take several months for the agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to act on the request. She said County Judge Mike Holcomb had approved the proposal.

Stuart D. Soffer of White Hall, a member of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Chemical Incineration, has asked that residents be allowed to keep the existing radios for their value of providing weather information.

Quarles said once the last chemical weapons are disposed of at the arsenal later this year, CSEPP support of the tone alert radio system will cease. The radios could be used as weather alerts for a period of time, but would have to be reset once every seven days to function, she added.

Because of a planned change in Federal Communications Commission frequency designations, she added, the radios would no longer be able to receive weather alerts on the NOAA system after a period of time."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.pbcommercial.com/LocalNews/LatestHeadlines/CSEPP-radios-3-31-10>

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ANNISTON CHEMICAL AGENT DISPOSAL FACILITY - NEW EPA RULES NOT EXPECTED TO IMPACT ARMY DEPOT CLEANUP

By Patrick McCreless

The Anniston Star

March 27, 2010

"Whatever new restrictions the Environmental Protection Agency imposes on potentially hazardous chemicals used at the Anniston Army Depot, local officials and experts are confident those limitations can be met.

EPA officials announced Monday they plan to tighten restrictions on four specific compounds suspected to cause cancer, including trichloroethylene (TCE), which depot cleanup crews and Anniston Water Works and Sewer Board workers have fought to keep out of the area's drinking water and ground water for decades.

Though the EPA has yet to announce how tight the new restrictions might be, the agency suggested the acceptable concentration of TCE in drinking water could be lowered from the current 5 parts per billion to 1 part per billion.

Such a decrease is just fine with Jim Miller, general manager of Anniston Water Works.

"We're basically good to go," Miller said of the Coldwater Spring treatment plant. "We could handle 100 times the TCE that's going in now."

The full article can be found at: http://www.annistonstar.com/view/full_story/6860254/article-New-EPA-rules-not-expected-to-impact-Army-depot-cleanup?instance=1st_right

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