

## Chem-Bio News

**1. ECBC [U.S. ARMY EDGEWOOD CHEMICAL BIOLOGICAL CENTER] ISSUED U.S. PATENT FOR IMPROVED SORBENT TO BE USED IN CHEMICAL DECONTAMINATION:** *"The new sorbent — a material used to absorb liquids or gases — accelerates the decontamination of substances such as chemical warfare agents (CWA), industrial chemicals, insecticides and VX, one of the most toxic and well-known nerve agents."*

**2. FOES QUESTION PUBLIC STAKE IN BU [BOSTON UNIVERSITY] LAB:** *"Questioners also expressed fear that lab researchers would develop biological weapons."*

**3. EPA OPENS ACCESS TO CHEMICAL INFORMATION:** *"The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is making it easier to find chemical information online. EPA is releasing a database, called ToxRefDB, which allows scientists and the interested public to search and download thousands of toxicity testing results on hundreds of chemicals. ToxRefDB captures 30 years and \$2 billion of testing results."*

**4. CRANE PULLS OUT RADIOACTIVE HOT CELLS AT HANFORD:** *"It's the fifth of nine contaminated hot cells being removed from the Hanford 327 Building, a research facility less than two miles north of Richland. During the Cold War, the hot cells were used for testing on highly radioactive materials, particularly fuel elements and cladding irradiated at Hanford reactors as part of plutonium production for the nation's nuclear weapons program."*

**5. HAMAS: EGYPT KILLS GAZANS WITH GAS:** *"This is not the first time Egypt launches poison gas attacks against tunnel workers. At least 40 tunnel workers have been poisoned by toxic gasses since the siege on Gaza began. A total of 145 have lost their lives in various events," Abu Zuhri pointed out."*

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**2. NEWPORT CHEMICAL DEPOT - GROUP PREPARES TO TAKE OVER INDIANA CHEMICAL DEPOT:** *"A local group expects to take control of the Army's Newport Chemical Depot by the end of this year and plans improvements to help attract businesses to the western Indiana site."*

# CB Daily Report

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### ECBC [U.S. ARMY EDGEWOOD CHEMICAL BIOLOGICAL CENTER] ISSUED U.S. PATENT FOR IMPROVED SORBENT TO BE USED IN CHEMICAL DECONTAMINATION

U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center News Release  
April 26, 2010

"The U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (ECBC), the premier national resource for chemical and biological defense, announced that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office awarded the Center with a patent for the invention of a sorbent technology designed to improve efforts to decontaminate highly toxic materials. U.S. patent number 7,678,736 marks the sixth U.S. patent issued to ECBC during the 2010 fiscal year.

The new sorbent — a material used to absorb liquids or gases — accelerates the decontamination of substances such as chemical warfare agents (CWA), industrial chemicals, insecticides and VX, one of the most toxic and well-known nerve agents.

“The increased efficiency reduces the amount of sorbent required to decontaminate affected surfaces and, therefore, the costs involved,” said ECBC Technical Director Rick Decker. “But more importantly, every step we take towards enhancing decontamination technology of chemical warfare agents takes us one step closer to protecting the warfighter and civilian population.”

Delivered as fine aerosol mists, CWAs deposit on surfaces of equipment and hardware including buildings, uniforms, weapons, vehicles and shelters — which presents serious inhalation threat to U.S. troops and first-responders of terrorist attacks. Capable of absorbing and converting extremely toxic materials into less toxic products, the modified reactive sorbents of the invention neutralize VX-contaminated surfaces 1,000 times faster than existing sorbent materials, according to George Wagner, Ph.D., the research chemist credited with the invention.

“While researching and developing a new sorbent technology, we aimed at making the CWA decontamination process more efficient,” said Wagner, who works in the Chemical Biological Detection, Protection and Decontamination Division of ECBC’s Research and Technology Directorate. “Each second counts when it comes to reducing the hazardous conditions our warfighters and homeland are exposed to.”

ECBC is currently seeking commercial partners to complete the development of its newest sorbent technology through a Collaborative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) which provides a means for private industry to collaborate with Army research and development activities. With numerous existing CRADAs with a variety of companies ranging from small businesses to Fortune 500, ECBC welcomes companies interested in a partnership to contact the Technical Industrial Liaison Officer via e-mail: [technical.outreach@apega.army.mil](mailto:technical.outreach@apega.army.mil) or by phone: 410-436-2031.

For more information about ECBC, visit <http://www.ecbc.army.mil/>.

The full article can be found at: [http://www.ecbc.army.mil/pr/download/Patent\\_Release\\_26April10.pdf](http://www.ecbc.army.mil/pr/download/Patent_Release_26April10.pdf)  
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## **FOES QUESTION PUBLIC STAKE IN BU [BOSTON UNIVERSITY] LAB**

By Travis Andersen  
Boston.com  
April 29, 2010

“Opponents of the Boston University biolab project say the school should develop vaccines on the site for illnesses plaguing the community, such as cancer and AIDS, instead of agents for diseases that they say pose no public health threat to the area.

Activists gathered before last night’s public meeting on the project, which was held at the Boston Marriott Copley Place, and spoke out against the facility, where scientists plan to hunt for vaccines for illnesses such as Ebola and to combat a plague.

They said such research would put residents of the South End and Roxbury at risk without offering any benefits.”

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“Questioners also expressed fear that lab researchers would develop biological weapons.

Mahmoud said the lab is prohibited by law from getting “engaged with bioweapons.”

Ellen Berlin, a spokeswoman for the BU Medical Campus, said the school is already conducting safety drills at the still-vacant lab with “simulated” germs.

The lab has been enveloped in controversy since the school first received federal funding in 2003.”

The full article can be found at:

[http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2010/04/29/foes\\_question\\_public\\_stake\\_in\\_bu\\_lab/](http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2010/04/29/foes_question_public_stake_in_bu_lab/)

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## **EPA OPENS ACCESS TO CHEMICAL INFORMATION**

Infection Control Today Magazine

April 29, 2010

“The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is making it easier to find chemical information online. EPA is releasing a database, called ToxRefDB, which allows scientists and the interested public to search and download thousands of toxicity testing results on hundreds of chemicals. ToxRefDB captures 30 years and \$2 billion of testing results.

"Tens of thousands of chemicals are in commerce and current chemical testing is expensive and time consuming. Results from chemical testing are scattered throughout different sources," said Dr. Robert Kavlock, director of EPA's National Center for Computational Toxicology. "ToxRefDB allows the public to search, find and compare available studies about chemical toxicity and potential health effects."

ToxRefDB provides detailed chemical toxicity data in an accessible format. It is a part of ACToR (Aggregated Computational Toxicology Resource), an online data warehouse that collects data from about 500 public sources on tens of thousands of environmentally relevant chemicals, including several hundred in ToxRefDB. Those interested in chemical toxicity can query a specific chemical and find all available public hazard, exposure, and risk-assessment data, as well as previously unpublished studies related to cancer, reproductive, and developmental toxicity.

ToxRefDB connects to an EPA chemical screening tool called ToxCast. ToxCast is a multi-year, multi-million dollar effort that uses advanced science tools to help understand biological processes impacted by chemicals that may lead to adverse health effects. ToxCast currently includes 500 fast, automated chemical screening tests that have assessed over 300 environmental chemicals. ToxRefDB, along with ACToR, allows users to take advantage of this linkage to find and download these results.

ToxRefDB contains toxicity information that forms the basis for pesticide risk assessments when combined with other sources of information, such as those on exposure and metabolism.

More information on the database: <http://actor.epa.gov/toxrefdb>”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/hotnews/epa-opens-access-to-chemicals-information.html>

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## **CRANE PULLS OUT RADIOACTIVE HOT CELLS AT HANFORD**

By Annette Cary

The TriCity Herald

April 29, 2010

“A hot cell once used to work with some of Hanford's most radioactive materials was slowly moved Wednesday out of the building that had been its home since 1953.

It's the fifth of nine contaminated hot cells being removed from the Hanford 327 Building, a research facility less than two miles north of Richland. During the Cold War, the hot cells were used for testing on highly radioactive materials, particularly fuel elements and cladding irradiated at Hanford reactors as part of plutonium production for the nation's nuclear weapons program.

Numerous accidents had spread contamination within the building, including areas outside the hot cells where remotely operated tools were used to work with the fuel."

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"In the nearby 324 Building, multi-story hot cells that were built into the structure are being cleaned out and filled with concrete. They then will be cut into blocks weighing from 20 tons to almost 1,000 tons each for removal and disposal.

Washington Closure is using a different approach at the 327 Building, which has modular hot cells.

After contamination was either removed or stabilized with a coating of fixative throughout the 30,000-square-foot building, subcontractor Barnhart Crane and Rigging of Portland started removing the hot cells.

A 20-foot-high and 30-foot-wide opening was cut into the side of the metal building so a Barnhart gantry crane that runs on rails could be installed deep into the building. After diamond wire saws are used to cut bolts that secured the hot cells to the floor, the crane lifts the cells one at a time and carries them out of the building.

Each is lowered onto a metal plate that becomes the base of a waste container box that will be built around the hot cell. When all the hot cells are in boxes, the boxes will be filled with grout, or concrete.

The largest of the cells is about 15-by-8-by-10-feet. It's made of high-density steel and lead and weighs 342,000 pounds. Its shipping weight will be about 456,000 pounds, and the gantry crane will lift it and other boxed hot cells so a truck can drive underneath."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.tri-cityherald.com/2010/04/29/994949/crane-pulls-out-radioactive-hot.html>

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## **HAMAS: EGYPT KILLS GAZANS WITH GAS**

PressTV.com

April 29, 2010

"A senior Hamas spokesman has held Egypt responsible for the death of four Palestinians killed in a border tunnel and has demanded for an impartial investigation.

Speaking at a press conference in Gaza on Thursday, Sami Abu Zuhri strongly condemned Cairo's application of gas against Palestinian citizens. The Hamas official also demanded Egypt to conduct an immediate probe into the incident and to prosecute the perpetrators, the International Middle East Media Center reported.

"This is not the first time Egypt launches poison gas attacks against tunnel workers. At least 40 tunnel workers have been poisoned by toxic gasses since the siege on Gaza began. A total of 145 have lost their lives in various events," Abu Zuhri pointed out."

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"Palestinian medical sources in the Gaza Strip reported on Wednesday evening that four Palestinians were killed and nine others were wounded after the Egyptian security forces pumped gas into a border

tunnel.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=124862&sectionid=351020202>  
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## **DU [DEHLI UNIVERSITY] STAFF ‘MISCALCULATED’ COBALT-60’S RADIOACTIVE TIME**

The Hindu  
April 29, 2010

“A day after the origin of Cobalt-60 was traced to Delhi University’s Chemistry Department, the University authorities on Thursday said it was a ‘miscalculation’ that the material had outlived its radioactive time, following which it was auctioned.”

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““If there is a mistake, the mistake is that it was not realised that the source (the radioactive material) may be much stronger than what people (of the department) were thinking. Because they are not the people who bought the source,” he told reporters.

The Cobalt-60 was imported by Prof. V. K. Sharma in 1968 from Canada with the permission of BARC. The material was last used in 1985. The material was lying in a room for 25 years and the Chemistry Department wanted to sell it off.

“It was calculated that it had outlived its radioactive time... because it comes to half in every five years,” Mr. Pental explained.

He said he spoke to the Department of Atomic Energy this morning on the issue. The body has already set up a committee for further investigation.

Mr. Pental said the University has set up a separate three-member committee under S. C. Pancholi, a retired professor and a nuclear scientist, to investigate the issue. The other members are Dr. N. C. Gooner and Dr. Dwarkanath.”

The full article can be found at: <http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article417636.ece?homepage=true>  
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## ***Chem-Demil News***

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### **UMATILLA CHEMICAL AGENT DISPOSAL FACILITY - MUSTARD AGENT TRIAL BURN BEGINS**

US Army Chemical Materials Agency Weekly Update  
April 29, 2010

“The Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) began the HD mustard Agent Trial Burn (ATB) at 1:47 p.m. today. The ATB will be conducted in the Metal Parts Furnace (MPF) and the two Liquid Incinerators (LICs).

The purpose of the ATB is threefold:

- To demonstrate compliance with permit limitations for plant emissions. In other words, the plant will show it can meet permit emission limits (including hydrochloric acid, mercury, particulate matter,

dioxins, and furans) while burning mustard agent in the LICs and processing TCs through the MPF.

- To demonstrate compliance with all performance standards. UMCDf aims for a Destruction and Removal Efficiency (DRE) of 99.9999 percent, which ensures complete destruction of the agent.
- To establish incinerator operating conditions under which UMCDf will conduct the remainder of the mustard campaign in the MPF and LICs. In other words, the ATB will determine the maximum processing rate for agent through the LICs and establish how many TCs can be processed through the MPF in one day.

The ATB is expected to take up to 60 days to complete.

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cma.army.mil/fndocumentviewer.aspx?DocID=003682818>  
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## **NEWPORT CHEMICAL DEPOT - GROUP PREPARES TO TAKE OVER INDIANA CHEMICAL DEPOT**

The Associated Press on Gazette.com  
April 29, 2010

“A local group expects to take control of the Army's Newport Chemical Depot by the end of this year and plans improvements to help attract businesses to the western Indiana site.”

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“The first projects planned by the Newport Chemical Depot Reuse Authority include updating its 70-year-old water system and electrical system for use by commercial and industrial companies, said Jack Fenoglio, the group's president.

The authority plans to open about half the depot's 7,100 acres to business development. The rest of the site about 25 miles north of Terre Haute will remain as open land or for agricultural use.

Military contractor Telic Corp. announced plans last year to open an administrative, manufacturing and development center at the Newport site could bring up to 500 jobs.

Fenoglio said the authority was talking with a coal liquification company that was seeking a 1,000-acre site.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.gazette.com/articles/newport-97924-chemical-prepares.html>  
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