

24 August 2009

Chem-Bio News

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CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

NUMBERS: 2-YEAR, \$118M WORK AT K-27 WILL EMPLOY 275

By Frank Munger
KnoxNews.com
August 18, 2009

"Pre-demolition work at the former K-27 uranium-enrichment building is under way, and the Department of Energy said the Recovery Act project will employ between 225 and 275 people for most of the two-year effort.

Bechtel Jacobs Co., DOE's cleanup manager in Oak Ridge is managing the project. DOE said

the work will involve removal of asbestos and other hazardous materials and generally prepare the big four-story building -- with a total square footage equivalent to six football fields -- so it can be demolished safely in the future.

K-27 was a sister facility to the original K-25 gaseous diffusion plant, which was built during World War II to enrich uranium for atomic bombs. It has been idle for decades and has significantly deteriorated, much like K-25, adding to the hazardous conditions. Miles of process equipment will be stabilized or injected with foam to immobilize uranium deposits before being sent to disposal sites."

The full article can be found at: http://blogs.knoxnews.com/munger/2009/08/numbers_2-year_118m_work_at_k-.html

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NORTON TRIES TO REASSURE RESIDENTS OVER CHEMICAL WEAPONS CLEANUP

By Michael E. Ruane
The Washington Post
August 20, 2009

"Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton toured World War I munitions burial sites in Northwest Washington on Wednesday and sought to reassure the public that the Army Corps of Engineers would continue its search for such materials for as long as it takes.

Norton (D-D.C.) was given a status report by the corps, which has been directing the \$170 million, 16-year cleanup of the munitions that are buried in scattered sites in the District's Spring Valley neighborhood.

This month, workers were surprised when they found a flask containing residue of the blistering agent mustard buried in the yard of a vacant house in the 4800 block of Glenbrook Road NW. Officials said they had thought cleanup at that site was almost finished."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/08/19/AR2009081902423.html?hpid=moreheadlines>

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SPECTER TO HOLD PITTSBURGH HEARING ON PROPOSED UPMC VACCINE PLANT

Pittsburgh Business Times
August 20, 2009

"en. Arlen Specter will conduct a hearing in Downtown Pittsburgh tomorrow to discuss the nation's biological vulnerabilities and the possibility of developing a vaccine plant in the Pittsburgh area.

The Senate Appropriations subcommittee hearing will be held at the federal courthouse and feature testimony by University of Pittsburgh Medical Center President and CEO Jeffrey Romoff, Dr. Donald Burke, dean of the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public Health and others."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.bizjournals.com/pittsburgh/stories/2009/08/17/daily37.html>

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Chem-Demil News

NON-STOCKPILE OPERATIONS AT PINE BLUFF ARSENAL

US Army Chemical Materials Agency Fact Sheet

August 21, 2009

"The U.S. Army Non-Stockpile Chemical Materiel Project (NSCMP) currently manages two operations at Pine Bluff Arsenal (PBA), Ark. These operations cooperate in the destruction of the nation's largest known inventory of recovered chemical warfare materiel.

PBA is one of six sites in the continental United States that is safely storing and monitoring the nation's chemical weapons stockpile, a mission successfully carried out for more than 50 years. In addition to this critical mission, PBA also safely stores and monitors other materiel classified as non-stockpile chemical materiel, which is not part of the nation's chemical stockpile. NSCMP's current missions at PBA include recovered chemical warfare materiel and miscellaneous chemical warfare materiel.

Four percent of PBA's recovered chemical warfare materiel was transported to PBA for safe storage and monitoring. Workers discovered the remaining recovered chemical warfare materiel on post during arsenal environmental restoration or recovery activities. NSCMP studied multiple disposal alternatives under guidelines found in the National Environmental Policy Act, considering the potential environmental impact before selecting, with public input, the treatment methods.

Continuing NSCMP operations at PBA

Pine Bluff Explosive Destruction System: PBEDS began operations in June 2006 to destroy recovered chemical warfare materiel at PBA. The system involved three Explosive Destruction System (EDS) units, each set up in a vapor containment structure. The EDS uses cutting charges to explosively access chemical munitions, eliminating their explosive capacity before the chemical agent is neutralized. The system's main component, a sealed, stainless steel vessel, contains all the blast, vapor and fragments from the process. The EDS is transportable, providing on-site treatment of chemical warfare materiel. Treatment confirmed by sampling residual liquid and air from the vessel prior to reopening the EDS. PBEDS successfully processed 1,169 items through October 2008, most of which were 4.2-inch mortars as well as German Traktor rockets, which have been located at PBA since they

were captured during World War II. Two of the rockets processed were recovered on the arsenal during PBEDS operations. The remaining 55 German Traktor rockets will be destroyed using two EDS units.

Pine Bluff Ton Container Decontamination Facility: The PBTCDF began operations in September 2003, with the mission of decontaminating and recycling more than 4,200 empty ton containers (TCs) stored at PBA. The 1,600-pound steel containers once held hazardous materials and require decontamination for residual chemical agent hazard. Operators heat the TCs to 1,000 F for 60 minutes, well in excess of the standard required by the Army to achieve chemical agent decontamination. This process significantly reduces liquid waste. Once decontaminated, TCs are loaded onto trailers for transport to a treatment, storage and disposal facility where they will be cut in half, have any remaining residue removed, and be recycled.

Completed projects

Assessment: NSCMP successfully completed a number of projects at PBA within recent years. The recovered items treated in PBEDS were assessed using the Pine Bluff Munitions Assessment System (PBMAS). This system identified the contents and explosive condition of the items before processing to enhance safe handling, treatment and disposal. PBMAS began analyzing the items in July 2005, using an X-ray system known as Digital Radiography and Computed Tomography (DRCT) and an assessment system known as Portable Isotopic Neutron Spectroscopy (PINS) to determine the contents, and whether the items were explosively configured. Prior to PBMAS, NSCMP also assessed 300 drums that contained recovered chemical warfare materiel, known as the XP300 mission.

CAIS Destruction: Another successful NSCMP mission at PBA included the Rapid Response System (RRS), a transportable treatment technology, which processed more than 5,300 Chemical Agent Identification Set (CAIS) items once stored at PBA. The RRS began operations in August 2005, and completed processing in November 2006.

German Traktor Rocket Separation System:

GTRSS was part of the effort to destroy the arsenal's captured German traktor rockets. Some rockets had rocket motors still attached, which made them too large to process in the EDS. The GTRSS detached warheads from motors to facilitate disposal.

Pine Bluff Former Production Facilities:

Pine Bluff Arsenal, Ark., once housed two former production facilities. Destroyed in 1999, the BZ Fill Facility filled munitions with the agent BZ, a hallucinogen similar to LSD. In 2003, NSCMP began demolition of the former Pine Bluff Integrated Binary Production Facilities (PB IBPF), which were designed to produce binary chemicals and fill binary chemical weapons. Binary chemical weapons were designed to mix two non-lethal chemicals to form a chemical agent while in flight to a target. The DF production/M20 Canister Fill and Close Facility was the only facility operated. From 1988 to 1990 it produced the binary precursor methylphosphonic difluoride (DF), inserting the chemical into coffee can-sized M20 canisters for use in the M687 155 mm Binary Artillery Projectile. The BLU-80/B Bigeye Bomb Fill Facility, QL Production Facility and DC Production Facility never operated, and all were

demolished.

The final remaining PB IBPF building, intended to fill binary munitions for the Multiple Launch Rocket System, but never used for that purpose, was reutilized as the Pine Bluff Binary Destruction Facility (PB BDF), to neutralize the binary precursor chemicals DF and QL. After neutralization was completed in October 2006, demolition of the building commenced and was completed on Dec. 28, 2006, marking the end of the PB IBPF demolition and the last former chemical warfare production facility destroyed in the United States. This accomplishment proved significant as it enabled NSCMP to meet the treaty milestone of complete demolition of all of the nation's former production facilities, an achievement reached four months ahead of schedule. Approximately 2,800 tons of metal were recycled from the IBPF."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cma.army.mil/include/docrendition.asp?DocID=003675214>

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LEXINGTON BLUE GRASS ARMY DEPOT - CHEMICAL WEAPONS INCINERATION SUIT SCRAPPED

By Hilary Russ

Law360

August 20, 2009

"A federal judge has scrapped a six-year-old lawsuit that challenged the U.S. Army's plans to dispose of leftover stockpiles of chemical weapons by incinerating them at storage facilities in four states.

Judge Richard Eaton dismissed the suit, granting the government's motion for summary judgment Wednesday in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

The Chemical Weapons Working Group, a nonprofit watchdog coalition of people who live near chemical weapons storage sites, sued the U.S. Department of Defense, the Army and EG&D Defense Materials Inc. in 2003, claiming that burning the nerve and blister agents spews dioxins and other pollutants into the environment and endangers public health.

Twenty other plaintiffs joined the suit, including the Sierra Club, the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation and the Calhoun County Chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Craig Williams, director of the Chemical Weapons Working Group, said the ruling was "unfortunate" and that the plaintiffs were still reviewing the case and deciding whether to appeal.

"The time it took to get it in front of the judge and then argued was extraordinary and ridiculous," he said of the long case. "We were allowed to supplement the record, but only to a point, so that by the time we argued the case, salient, very relevant events had occurred

that were not allowed to be presented."

Specifically, the groups weren't allowed to include information that some facilities are using newer disposal technologies that could be less potentially harmful, Williams said.

While there are eight sites where the destruction of the chemical agents takes place, the four covered in the lawsuit - in Utah, Arkansas, Alabama and Oregon - contain rockets, artillery shells and other explosive devices with chemical agents in addition to the chemical agents stored in ton containers in noncontested sites, the opinion said.

The lawsuit alleged that the Army violated the National Environmental Policy Act by failing to provide a supplemental analysis that took into account new, alternative technologies for the destruction of the chemical weapons stockpile - some of which dates back to World War II - at the four locations."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cwwg.org/law08.20.09.html>

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