

28 August 2009

Chem-Bio News

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- 2. PROTESTERS TELL MONTREAL TO CHANGE STREET NAME HONOURING BRITISH GENERAL:** *"About a dozen demonstrators gathered in front of city hall Monday to demand that politicians change the name of Amherst Street, which honours Jeffery Amherst."*
- 3. VA ENDS GULF WAR ILLNESS RESEARCH CONTRACT:** *"The Department of Veterans Affairs has canceled a \$75 million, five-year research contract with a Texas medical center studying illnesses suffered by veterans of the first Gulf War."*
- 4. BIO-TERROR LABORATORY FAILS INSPECTION:** *"Allegheny County's \$5.6 million bio-terror laboratory in Lawrenceville has failed an inspection, delaying once again the opening of the facility that was finished in 2007 but has been beset by an assortment of delays, poor construction and breakdowns."*

Chem-Demil News

- 1. PUEBLO CHEMICAL DEPOT - SECOND SUIT FILED BY STATE AGAINST ARMY:** *"Colorado state health authorities have filed a second lawsuit against the U.S. Army, alleging it needs to do more to protect the public from the dangerous weapons stored at the Pueblo Chemical Depot."*

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

OPM PROPOSES NEW LEAVE POLICIES FOR PANDEMICS, FAMILY CARE

By Alyssa Rosenberg
Government Executive.com
August 26, 2009

"The Office of Personnel Management proposed regulations on Wednesday that would make it easier for federal employees to take time off to care for family members who have been exposed to dangerous communicable diseases or wounded in combat.

"It's a very generous federal benefit, and it's one that makes us a model employer," Jerome Mikowicz, deputy associate director of the Center for Pay and Leave Administration at OPM, said of the communicable disease benefit.

Currently, federal employees can use sick leave to care for a family member who health authorities have barred from work because of a communicable illness that could endanger other people at their workplace.

That change, published in the Federal Register on Wednesday, would broaden the circumstances under which federal employees can use sick time to care for a family member with a communicable disease. It would include relatives who have been exposed to, but not yet diagnosed with, a dangerous illness like H1N1 flu. To be eligible for this benefit, an employee must provide evidence that a health official determined it would be dangerous for the person they would care for to be out in the community.

The proposed regulations would allow agencies to advance 30 days of sick leave to employees if they are diagnosed with or exposed to a communicable disease, and 13 days if they need to care for a family member under similar circumstances. Federal employees would owe the government that leave, but the benefit would make it easier to take time off when public health is at stake."

The full article can be found at: http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=43473&dcn=todaysnews

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PROTESTERS TELL MONTREAL TO CHANGE STREET NAME HONOURING BRITISH GENERAL

The Canadian Press
August 24, 2009

"About a dozen demonstrators gathered in front of city hall Monday to demand that politicians change the name of Amherst Street, which honours Jeffery Amherst.

They waved Quebec flags and chanted "Amherst criminal" and "Amherst murderer" in front of city hall.

In a successful military career, Amherst led British forces to victory against the French in Canada in the mid-1700s.

But some believe he used smallpox-infected blankets and handkerchiefs as a form of biological warfare against native Americans.

The protest was organized by the separatist group Young Patriots of Quebec."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.canadaeast.com/front/article/770466>

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VA ENDS GULF WAR ILLNESS RESEARCH CONTRACT

By Suzanne Gamboa

The Associated Press on Government Executive.com

August 26, 2009

"The Department of Veterans Affairs has canceled a \$75 million, five-year research contract with a Texas medical center studying illnesses suffered by veterans of the first Gulf War.

The VA says research on the illnesses, however, remains a priority.

Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Daniel Akaka, a Democrat from Hawaii, has been pushing to the end the sole-source contract with the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas."

The full article can be found at: http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=43472&dcn=todaysnews

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BIO-TERROR LABORATORY FAILS INSPECTION

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

August 27, 2009

"Allegheny County's \$5.6 million bio-terror laboratory in Lawrenceville has failed an inspection, delaying once again the opening of the facility that was finished in 2007 but has been beset by an assortment of delays, poor construction and breakdowns.

An independent inspector, Larry Milchak, cited the lab for faulty alarms signalling a power failure and poor seals around doors and other areas of the biosafety level-3 lab that could allow contaminated, potentially deadly air to leak out.

The Allegheny County Health Department has moved workers into other parts of the 10,000-square-foot facility and hopes to have the 500-square-foot "BSL-3" lab fixed, reinspected and operational in time for the G-20 summit in Pittsburgh Sept. 24-25."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/09239/993579-53.stm>

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Chem-Demil News

PUEBLO CHEMICAL DEPOT - SECOND SUIT FILED BY STATE AGAINST ARMY

By Robert Boczkiewicz

The Pueblo Chieftain

August 27, 2009

"Colorado state health authorities have filed a second lawsuit against the U.S. Army, alleging it needs to do more to protect the public from the dangerous weapons stored at the Pueblo Chemical Depot.

Mike Saccone, spokesman for the Colorado Attorney General's office, said Wednesday, "We are seeking to ensure that there is sufficient monitoring and safe storage of the chemical weapons at the Pueblo Chemical Depot." The lawsuit seeks a judge's order requiring the Army to comply with the Colorado Hazardous Waste Act and seeks unspecified monetary penalties for allegedly violating the act.

State health officials have been critical in recent years of the Army's policy of only quarterly inspections of the igloos, where 780,000 aging weapons are stored. The artillery shells and mortar rounds, containing mustard agent, are more than 60 years old and occasionally leak vapor.

The state Department and Public Health and Environment filed the lawsuit earlier this month in Pueblo District Court and the Army this week moved the lawsuit to U.S. District Court.

The department sued the depot last fall seeking a court order to establish what Saccone characterized as "an enforceable treatment schedule" in the disposal of the highly toxic weapons that contain mustard gas. The goal of the state was to get a court order backing up a congressionally mandated timetable to dispose of the weapons. The attorney general's office is representing the health department in the lawsuits.

The new lawsuit alleges the Army depot is violating the act because depot officials "continue to operate without the required monitoring" of the stored weapons."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.chieftain.com/articles/2009/08/27/news/local/doc4a96127245a2c374043640.txt>

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