

Chem-Bio News

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TERRORIST-PROOF: "As far as they can tell, they may be the only guys in the country who have been forced to fortify their brewing tanks, and no one can give a clear answer why."

2. [CA] GOVERNMENT MOVES TO RESTRICT ACCESS TO TOXINS AND PATHOGENS:

"The federal government has introduced legislation to limit access to disease-causing pathogens and toxins and to dictate how they should be handled."

3. HARMAN RE-INTRODUCES BIPARTISAN, BICAMERAL BILL TO CONFRONT BIOTERRORISM

THREAT: "Rep. Jane Harman (D-CA), Chair of the Homeland Security Intelligence & Terrorism Risk Assessment Subcommittee and Rep. Mike Rogers (R-MI), Member of the House Intelligence Committee, today introduced legislation to reauthorize and update the Select Agent Program -- administered by the Health and Human Services and Agriculture Departments -- which controls the transfer of biological agents and toxins that could potentially be used for bioterrorism."

4. MEMO QUESTIONS LOS ALAMOS LAB'S CONTROL OF PLUTONIUM: "In a Feb. 23 memo to the director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, officials in the Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration said inaccurate inventory records at the lab's plutonium research, development and processing facility raised doubts about the lab's ability to "deter and detect theft and diversion of special nuclear material."

5. IRAN HAS ENOUGH MATERIAL TO MAKE NUCLEAR BOMB: US ADMIRAL: "The United States believes Iran has enough fissile material to build a nuclear bomb, top military officer Admiral Mike Mullen said on Sunday, marking the first time Washington has made such an assessment."

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

PROTECTING THE PUBS - FEDERAL REGULATIONS FORCE MICROBREWERY TO GET TERRORIST-PROOF

By Colin Rigley
New Times
February 25, 2009

"Two SLO brewers were eager to open their new pub, but first they were told they had to protect the beer from terrorists. As far as they can tell, they may be the only guys in the country who have been forced to fortify their brewing tanks, and no one can give a clear answer why."

The TTB forced Moule and Beaton to better protect their product. That much is clear. Exactly why they had to do that isn't quite so obvious.

The TTB application required Moule to check a box stating that the brewing equipment was secure, but there was no definition of what secure meant. Moule thought the tanks were fine, so he checked the box. He was wrong.

Originally the tanks at Creekside were partitioned by a couple of poles and chains. A TTB representative told the owners the tanks had to be behind a physical barrier with locking doors.

Moule and Beaton protested the last-minute and costly requirement, but didn't get very far. Aside from the added cost, a wall would hide the tanks and destroy the brewpub atmosphere. Even after Moule put locks on all the openings, TTB representatives still said it wasn't enough: they had to put up a wall.

It took some prodding, but Moule said the representative finally told him the wall was needed to prevent someone from poisoning the beer. What's more, she told him it was a post-Sept. 11 measure that fell under the supervision of the Department of Homeland Security.

New Times tried to track down precisely which anti-terrorism precautions required that the tanks be behind walls, with no luck."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.newtimeslo.com/news/2062/protecting-the-pubs/>
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[CA] GOVERNMENT MOVES TO RESTRICT ACCESS TO TOXINS AND PATHOGENS

By Gloria Galloway
The Globe and Mail (CA)
February 27, 2009

"The federal government has introduced legislation to limit access to disease-causing pathogens and toxins and to dictate how they should be handled."

"Laboratories - local community labs that diagnose disease, as well as university and government research labs - are required to follow bio-safety guidelines before they can import pathogens, explained Theresa Tam, director-general of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Those import regulations apply to about 3,500 facilities across Canada.

But, said Dr. Tam, "there is a gap in that laboratories that do not import pathogens currently fall outside the existing regulations."

"Under the new law, no one who is not licensed by the government would be permitted to possess, produce, store, transfer or dispose of a human pathogen or toxin.

In addition, the disease-causing materials would be divided into categories, according to the level of risk they present, and technicians would be required to handle them accordingly.

The legislation makes it clear that the regulations won't apply to diseases that occur naturally in human beings. No one will be carted off to jail for coming down with Ebola.

But the consequences for those who knowingly violate the law could be fines of \$1-million and jail terms of five years."

The full article can be found at:
<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20090227.wtoxins27/BNStory/National/home>
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HARMAN RE-INTRODUCES BIPARTISAN, BICAMERAL BILL TO CONFRONT BIOTERRORISM THREAT

American Chronicle
February 26, 2009

"Rep. Jane Harman (D-CA), Chair of the Homeland Security Intelligence & Terrorism Risk Assessment Subcommittee and Rep. Mike Rogers (R-MI), Member of the House Intelligence Committee, today introduced legislation to reauthorize and update the Select Agent Program -- administered by the Health and Human Services and Agriculture Departments -- which controls the transfer of biological agents and toxins that could potentially be used for bioterrorism."

“In addition to reauthorizing the Select Agent Program, the legislation:

Requires the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the SAP, and recommend ways in which it can be restructured to enhance biosecurity and international scientific collaboration;

Requires that the SAP consider newly discovered agents – such as genetically modified organisms, synthetic compounds, and other agents identified in Department of Homeland Security risk assessments – to ensure that the list of agents is current and comprehensive;

Encourages the sharing of information with state emergency planning officials, which is vital to ensuring that first responders have the tools they need to prevent or respond to an attack;

Ensures minimum biosecurity and biosafety standards for the training of workers in the laboratories that deal with the most dangerous substances.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/92528>

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MEMO QUESTIONS LOS ALAMOS LAB'S CONTROL OF PLUTONIUM

By Katherine McIntire Peters

Government Executive.com

February 27, 2009

“In a Feb. 23 memo to the director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, officials in the Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration said inaccurate inventory records at the lab's plutonium research, development and processing facility raised doubts about the lab's ability to “deter and detect theft and diversion of special nuclear material.”

The memo was in response to the findings of a special review team's assessment of an “incident of security concern” involving amounts of nuclear material “that exceeded alarm limits with no suspicion of theft or diversion” earlier this month.”

Nonetheless, Energy awarded the Los Alamos National Security LLC, the contractor that runs the lab for the government, a performance bonus of \$1.4 million last year, said Ingrid Drake, an investigator at POGO.

The performance award was for security during the 2007-2008 period and included criteria related to nuclear material control and accountability, raising questions about the integrity of contract oversight, Drake said.”

The full article can be found at: http://govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=42148&dcn=todaysnews

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IRAN HAS ENOUGH MATERIAL TO MAKE NUCLEAR BOMB: US ADMIRAL

Agence France-Presse on Defence Talk.com

March 2, 2009

“The United States believes Iran has enough fissile material to build a nuclear bomb, top military officer Admiral Mike Mullen said on Sunday, marking the first time Washington has made such an assessment.

“We think they do, quite frankly,” Mullen told CNN when asked if Iran had enough nuclear material to manufacture an atomic bomb.

"And Iran having a nuclear weapon, I've believed for a long time, is a very, very bad outcome for the region and for the world," said Mullen, the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff."

The full article can be found at:

http://www.defencetalk.com/news/publish/wmd/Iran_has_enough_material_to_make_nuclear_bomb_US_admiral170017255.php

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