

Chem-Bio News

1. NNSA COMPLETES CONVERSION OF THE BUDAPEST RESEARCH REACTOR AND REMOVAL OF ALL FRESH HEU IN HUNGARY: *"This week, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), in cooperation with KFKI Atomic Energy Research Institute, successfully converted the Budapest Research Reactor (BRR) from the use of highly enriched uranium (HEU) fuel to low enriched uranium (LEU) fuel."*

2. RECOVERY FROM DIRTY BOMB WOULD FALL ON FEDS BUT THEY AREN'T READY: *"US cities would be so overwhelmed by a dirty bomb or nuclear bomb attack that they would invariably rely upon the federal government for recovery, but agencies like the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have not yet completed their planning for delivering such assistance, congressional investigators warned Monday."*

3. 'DIRTY BOMB' BREAKTHROUGH: *"Trials of a new device, no bigger than a small suitcase, which can rapidly detect the extent of cellular damage caused by exposure to a nuclear "dirty bomb" or a radiation leak, will be announced this week."*

4. U.S. TO REVIEW MASKS AS STUDY SHOWS FLU GETS THROUGH (UPDATE2): *"Surgical masks are probably most useful when worn by patients to catch respiratory droplets that otherwise might spread directly to their close contacts or contaminate surfaces," McNiece said."*

Chem-Demil News

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2. UMATILLA CHEMICAL AGENT DISPOSAL FACILITY - CHEMICAL DEPOT UNION SUES CONTRACTOR: *"The union that covers workers at the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility has filed an unfair labor practice suit against Washington Group, contractors for the facility, which destroy chemical weapons stored at the Umatilla Chemical Depot."*

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

NNSA COMPLETES CONVERSION OF THE BUDAPEST RESEARCH REACTOR AND REMOVAL OF ALL FRESH HEU IN HUNGARY

US National Nuclear Security Administration News Release
September 15, 2009

"Atomic Energy Research Institute, successfully converted the Budapest Research Reactor (BRR) from the use of highly enriched uranium (HEU) fuel to low enriched uranium (LEU) fuel. The BRR conversion followed the successful removal of 18 kilograms of Russian-origin HEU fresh fuel from the Budapest Research Reactor in cooperation with NNSA in July 2009.

"The successful conversion of the Budapest Research Reactor and the removal of 18 kilograms of HEU fresh fuel from the site represent a major step forward in NNSA's ongoing efforts to implement President Obama's unprecedented nuclear security agenda," said NNSA Administrator Thomas P. D'Agostino. "These cooperative efforts continue to demonstrate NNSA's strong international commitment to minimize the use of highly enriched uranium and remove excess nuclear and radiological materials from civilian sites around the world. We commend the Atomic Energy Research Institute in Hungary for its efforts to advance our common interest in securing nuclear materials

worldwide and reducing the threat of nuclear terrorism.”

The full article can be found at: <http://nnsa.energy.gov/news/2543.htm>

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RECOVERY FROM DIRTY BOMB WOULD FALL ON FEDS BUT THEY AREN'T READY

By Mickey McCarter

HSToday

September 15, 2009

“US cities would be so overwhelmed by a dirty bomb or nuclear bomb attack that they would invariably rely upon the federal government for recovery, but agencies like the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have not yet completed their planning for delivering such assistance, congressional investigators warned Monday.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) surveyed 13 major US cities and their states and related FEMA regional offices, discovering that each quickly would require assistance from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for analysis and cleanup activities, which would significantly mitigate the impact of a radiological dispersal device (RDD) or an improvised nuclear device (IND), Gene Aloise, GAO director of Natural Resources and Environment, testified before the House Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, and Science and Technology.

"However, we found that the federal government has not sufficiently planned to undertake these activities," Aloise stated. "For example, FEMA has not issued a national disaster recovery strategy or plans for RDD and IND incidents as required by law. Existing federal guidance provides only limited direction for federal agencies to develop their own recovery plans and conduct exercises to test preparedness. Out of over 70 RDD and IND exercises conducted in the last five years, only three have included interagency recovery discussions following a response exercise."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.hstoday.us/content/view/10223/128/>

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'DIRTY BOMB' BREAKTHROUGH

By Nina Lakhani

The Independent (UK)

September 13, 2009

“British scientists have developed a revolutionary method of treating victims of radiation contamination. Trials of a new device, no bigger than a small suitcase, which can rapidly detect the extent of cellular damage caused by exposure to a nuclear "dirty bomb" or a radiation leak, will be announced this week. It could mean doctors being able to scan hundreds of potential victims at an incident within hours.

Current methods involve scientists taking blood samples which then undergo a complex battery of tests. Experts estimate that existing UK labs could handle only 100 samples a week.

Dr Kai Rothkamm, of the UK Health Protection Agency, said: "If there was a major radiological or nuclear event the hospitals in this country could be overwhelmed."

The new equipment will assess the total body dose of radiation by detecting the damage to proteins in the nucleus of cells. Each machine will be capable of processing 30 samples per hour."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/dirty-bomb-breakthrough-1786616.html>

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U.S. TO REVIEW MASKS AS STUDY SHOWS FLU GETS THROUGH (UPDATE2)

By Tom Randall and Jason Gale

Bloomberg.com

September 16, 2009

“The U.S. government said it’s reviewing recommendations on the use of surgical masks to protect health-care workers from flu after a study showed they don’t help. Thicker, more expensive respirators should be used, the study found.

Surgical masks didn’t stop the spread of flu and other respiratory illnesses during a five-week study involving 1,936 health-care workers at 24 hospitals in Beijing last winter. Thicker versions designed to better fit the face, called N95 masks and made by 3M Co., reduced flu by 75 percent. The N95s cost 5 to 10 times more, said study author Raina MacIntyre, head of public health at the University of New South Wales in Sydney.”

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“Masks to protect against the swine flu virus are on back- order through 2009, 3M Chief Executive Officer George Buckley said on a July 23 conference call.

Australia’s government currently recommends health-care workers use P2 respirators, the nation’s equivalent of N95s, when performing high-risk procedures on patients with swine flu, Kay McNiece, a spokeswoman for the nation’s health ministry, said in an e-mail. Surgical masks are recommended for health- care workers in lower-risk settings, she said.

“Surgical masks are probably most useful when worn by patients to catch respiratory droplets that otherwise might spread directly to their close contacts or contaminate surfaces,” McNiece said. “The government’s health experts will look closely at this study,” she said, adding the government has stockpiled 8.4 million P2 masks.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601124&sid=aom5wokKoMSo>

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Chem-Demil News

UMATILLA CHEMICAL DEPOT - PLANS BEING MADE FOR CHEMICAL DEPOT'S FUTURE

By Annette Cary

TriCity Herald

September 13, 2009

“Officials are ready to start showing off the Umatilla Chemical Depot to prospective buyers.

The last of the chemical weapons stored on the site are expected to be incinerated sometime between next summer and summer 2011, and the site already has been listed as surplus, said Umatilla County Commissioner Bill Hansell.

The Umatilla Army Depot Re-Use Authority, which Hansell chairs, is working with the Army to develop a land use, economic and environmental protection plan for the depot acreage. The plan will consider possible property available for redevelopment once weapons destruction and cleanup are done.

While the Army will consider selling surplus buildings and property, it also will consider proposals to

benefit the public good. Future uses also could include keeping native shrub steppe habitat as wildland.

As planning gets under way for the future of the depot, the reuse authority has hired the team of Dana Engineering and MSE in the Tri-Cities to evaluate base properties and buildings and help prepare a proposal. The federal Base Realignment and Closure process requires that a plan be developed that considers all of the assets and infrastructure on the land before a property transfer can happen.

Already federal agencies have been notified that the 19,728 acres that lie in Umatilla and Morrow counties will be available for reuse, but no agency has indicated interest, said Brian Cole, executive director of the Dana Mission Support Team.

Next, leaders of public agencies are invited to tour the depot Sept. 22 to learn about the closing of the base and how to submit a Notice of Interest to acquire property.

Organizations and agencies that might be interested include groups connected with airports, prisons, historic monuments, law enforcement, ports, parks, public health, schools, self-help housing and wildlife conservation, according to the Dana Mission Support Team. Federal law also requires agencies that house the homeless to be given consideration.

A second tour is planned Oct. 21 for businesses and members of the public interested in buying base property for development. Those interested must submit a notice by 5 p.m. Nov. 23."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cwwg.org/tch09.13.09.html>

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UMATILLA CHEMICAL AGENT DISPOSAL FACILITY - CHEMICAL DEPOT UNION SUES CONTRACTOR

By Karen Hutchinson-Talaski
The Hermiston Herald
September 09, 2009

"The union that covers workers at the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility has filed an unfair labor practice suit against Washington Group, contractors for the facility, which destroy chemical weapons stored at the Umatilla Chemical Depot.

The suit, filed by the IOUE Local 701 Demil Trades Council with the National Labor Relations Board, alleges the company engaged in bad faith bargaining, regressive bargaining, refused to provide relevant information, and failed to respond to meeting requests."

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"Rod Osgood, a union field representative, said he contacted the Department of Labor to determine when crews should be paid, either after workers were onsite or when they receive their masks and syringes. Before workers enter the facility site, they must pick up the masks and syringes of chemical antidote - a requirement to work at the plant.

Workers then wait at the entry gate for identification checks; a process that can take up to five to 45 minutes, depending on whether or not the plant is under lockdown or a large number of people either entering or exiting the site.

The labor department told Osgood that workers' start and stop times should be when picking up masks; however, the department would have to conduct an investigation.

In January 2008, a Utah judge ordered URS to pay workers at the Tooele Chemical Depot's demilitarization facility to pay workers for hours not compensated - the very thing Osgood was trying to get for his union workers. The settlement amount for Tooele workers was \$4 million."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cwwg.org/hh09.09.09.html>
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