



U.S. Army Element, Assembled
Chemical Weapons Alternatives

ACWA QUARTERLY BRIEF

A Partnership for Safe Chemical Weapons Destruction

December 2009



HOT TOPIC

Destruction Gap Effort Assessment Complete. The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, known as CMA, is aiming toward complete destruction of 90 percent of the U.S. chemical weapons stockpile by 2012. ACWA's two facilities, which are currently under construction, are slated to commence destruction of the remaining 10 percent of the nation's stockpile in late 2014 or early 2015 at its Colorado site and in 2018 at its Kentucky site, resulting in a continuity gap in U.S. chemical demilitarization. In October, the Office of the Secretary of Defense challenged the ACWA program to determine how the destruction gap could be bridged, consistent with on-going efforts to accelerate the destruction effort at both sites and while maintaining our exemplary safety record. As a result, ACWA has conducted and submitted an assessment that examines how destruction plans might be augmented to provide this continuity.

PILOT PLANT UPDATES

Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP)

2009 At-a-Glance:

Design of the Blue Grass facility reached 97 percent completion, with the remaining design packages to be finished in 2010. For the Munitions Demilitarization Building, where the bulk of destruction operations will take place, an explosive containment area redesign was completed, and in August, the Department of Defense



Silhouetted against the evening sky is the steel skeleton of the Control and Support Building, what will be the electronic nerve center of the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant.

Explosives Safety Board approved construction activities in this section of the building. Other construction efforts included horizontal concrete placements for the Control and Support Building, Water Storage Tanks, and underground utilities, all of which culminated with the site's first vertical construction in September, when structural steel was placed for the Control and Support Building. Additionally, fabrication and testing continued on site-specific equipment, including the Metal Parts Treater and Energetics Batch Hydrolyzer.

Acquisitions: Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass has awarded more than \$43.9 million in subcontracts to Kentucky companies since project inception.



The principal structures of the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant, seen in this December aerial view, are rapidly dominating what was just weeks ago a flat, 54-acre open field.

MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER

I am proud to report that 2009 was a dynamic year for the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives program, known as ACWA. By partnering with other Army commands, we safely completed operations on the program's first chemical weapons destruction effort: Operation *Swift Solution*, the destruction



Applauding Operation Swift Solution awardees are (from left) Jean Reed, Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Chemical and Biological Defense and Chemical Demilitarization); Kevin Flamm, ACWA program manager; Rick Decker, U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center technical director; and Conrad Whyne, U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency director.

of three corroding containers holding GB nerve agent in storage at the Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky. Additionally, we resolved two key, longstanding issues facing the program with the submission of recommendations to Congress regarding the program's schedule acceleration and the decision to treat hydrolysate on site unless problems arise.

The construction teams have been transforming all of the planning and preparation required to build chemical weapons destruction facilities into reality. The Blue Grass and Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant teams maintained momentum on the ground this year, which is detailed in the "Pilot Plant Updates" section of this brief. Their achievements would not have been possible without a government and contractor workforce that has been a standard-bearer for safety. Not only did Pueblo become the first demilitarization site under construction to be awarded Star Status in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) in February, but also Blue Grass increased its safety record this year to more than 4.3 million job hours without a lost-time injury and is now also applying for VPP status. Combined, both sites posted an average recordable injury rate of 1.02 for FY 2009, which is significantly better than industry average.

For ACWA's dedicated workforce, commitment to safety and active public involvement are a formula for continued success and future progress. As construction moves ahead, our teams will be focused on the development and testing of the specialized systems and equipment needed in each of the pilot plants, the planning and preparation for systemization activities and the transition into actual destruction operations. Together with the support of the Congress and stakeholders at federal, state and local levels, these efforts are bringing us closer every day to our collective goal of safe chemical weapons destruction and have set the stage for a successful 2010.

Kevin Flamm

**Program Manager,
Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives**



Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (PCAPP)

2009 At-a-Glance: Although the “topping off” of the Enhanced Reconfiguration Building was a highlight of the year at the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant, much construction progress was made on other fronts. Processing equipment was installed in the Agent Processing Building; many new support buildings sprung from the ground; corridors connecting key areas of the plant were built; and an 86-foot air filtration stack that will vent air before being released back into the atmosphere was installed. Testing and validation continues on site-specific equipment, including the Munitions Washout System and Projectile/Mortar Disassembly Unit.

Acquisitions: Bechtel Pueblo has awarded more than \$194 million in subcontracts to Colorado companies since project inception.



Bechtel Pueblo construction manager Ed Snatchko (left) explains plant construction details to Colorado Citizens' Advisory Commission (CAC) chair, Irene Kornelly (right), and CAC vice chair, Terry Hart, during a recent site visit.



Some 300 construction workers are employed building the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant. The workers seen here are preparing forms for the placement of concrete in the Enhanced Reconfiguration Building where the explosive components of the chemical munitions will be removed.



Site Project Manager Gary Anderson speaks to a wind-swept crowd at the dedication of the Defense Access Road to one of Pueblo's WWII heroes, the late Pete Jimenez, an Army recipient of the French Legion of Honor, the Bronze Star and five Purple Hearts. The Access Road was built to more safely accommodate the pilot plant's heavy construction traffic.



The 86-foot air filtration stack stands against the December sky, overlooking seven of the 10 carbon filter units through which all air exiting the plant must pass before being released back into the atmosphere.

NEXT 90 DAYS AT ACWA

Pueblo

- Initiation of plant systemization by the EG&G Division of URS Corporation
- Increased hiring for construction and systemization/operations

Blue Grass

- The Army and Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass will reach agreement on remaining construction efforts, which will allow future completion of the Munitions Demilitarization Building, Supercritical Water Oxidation Processing Building and other support facilities
- Technical evaluation of the contractor-submitted proposal for Phase 2 of First-of-a-Kind equipment fabrication and testing (Phase 2 includes such major systems as the Supercritical Water Oxidation system, the Rocket Cutting Machine, the Rocket Shear Machine and the Munitions Washout System)

Additionally, ACWA expects to receive guidance on the destruction gap assessment described on Page 1.

Connect with ACWA

U.S. Army Element, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives, known as ACWA, is responsible for the safe destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles at the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot in Colorado and the Blue Grass Army Depot in Kentucky.

Visit www.pmacwa.army.mil for more information about chemical weapons destruction in Colorado and Kentucky, and to sign up for monthly e-mail updates regarding progress at the pilot plants and program news.

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For additional information, please contact the ACWA Communications and Congressional Affairs office at (410) 436-3398.