



U.S. Army Element, Assembled
Chemical Weapons Alternatives

ACWA QUARTERLY BRIEF

A Partnership for Safe Chemical Weapons Destruction

September 2010



HOT TOPICS

New Path Charted for Explosive Destruction Technologies in Pueblo. After careful consideration, the February 2010 Environmental Assessment (EA) has been withdrawn and a new EA will be completed in 2011. The Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) program will focus on the originally planned use of explosive destruction technology (EDT) for destroying overpacked and reject munitions. In addition, the Pueblo team is considering using EDT to destroy explosive components removed from munitions, and one category of munitions that pose a unique handling risk to workers. The decision made included input from a 63-day public comment period and an extensive review by senior Department of Defense leadership.

Blue Grass on Display for Director General. In September, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Director General, Ahmet Üzümcü, paid a visit to the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP). Üzümcü, other OPCW dignitaries and Defense Department leaders received tours of the Blue Grass Chemical Activity's storage facilities and the BGCAPP construction site. They also met with community members to learn how the public has been involved in the chemical weapons destruction program in Kentucky.

A Special Delivery for Pueblo. In August, Pueblo community leaders, including members of the Colorado Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission, joined managers at the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (PCAPP) to observe the arrival of the first of 16 Immobilized Cell Bioreactors, or ICBs, on the construction site. The ICBs will use biotreatment technology to treat the liquid byproduct of the neutralization process that will destroy the chemical weapons in Pueblo.

ACWA and Social Media: A Perfect Match. Stakeholders can now follow ACWA on Facebook and Twitter to get the latest program news, to see the progress at the Blue Grass and Pueblo construction sites, and to ask questions and give feedback. Social media tools complement ACWA's public outreach program that encourages involvement, transparency and feedback. To connect with ACWA via Facebook, Twitter, or other online tools, visit the ACWA website: www.pmacwa.army.mil.



A Four Star Day for ACWA

Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody, commander of Army Materiel Command (AMC), center, was briefed on her Sept. 16, 2010, visit to Aberdeen Proving Ground by the U.S. Army Element, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives Program Manager Kevin Flamm, at right, with the entire headquarters program management office in attendance. Listening at left is AMC Command Sergeant Major Jeffrey Mellinger.

PILOT PLANT UPDATES

Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP)

Design Update: Designs for Standby Diesel Generators, the Electronic Security System and the Entry Control Facility were accepted by the government on July 26, 2010, officially signifying the completion of the BGCAPP design phase.

Construction Update: This month the first of 13 vertical concrete placements was completed for the blast walls of the main Munitions Demilitarization Building (MDB), where most of BGCAPP's destruction activities will take place. The last of three Energetic Neutralization Reactors, which will treat the byproduct of the neutralization of each munition's explosive components, was also placed on the MDB foundation. Other focus areas include foundation work for the Supercritical Water Oxidation Process Building, installation of insulated siding and roofing panels on the Utility Building, pressure testing of piping within the Fire Water Pump House, and work on the first two Utility Power Centers.



Under the Cover of Darkness

Jim Harris, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers quality manager, peeks into the forms of the Munitions Demilitarization Building blast walls, which are being specially built to protect workers in the unlikely event of an explosion during BGCAPP operations. The forms were filled with concrete in the early morning hours of Sept. 11, 2010.



BGCAPP grew taller last quarter as workers continued to focus on structural steel for the facility's primary processing buildings. This work will continue over the next several months, in addition to ongoing efforts to enclose the buildings with siding.



Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (PCAPP)

Construction Update: Siding and roofing were installed for the corridor that connects the Munitions Service Magazines that will provide storage during operations. Interior HVAC and process piping is being installed in the Enhanced Reconfiguration Building. Additionally, the first of two Standby Diesel Generators was recently delivered and set into place in the Biotreatment Area of the plant. The first of eight Cavity Access Machines also arrived in September; it will be used to internally access and then wash out mustard agent within the chemical munitions.

Systemization Update: Pre-systemization, the development of the necessary documents, which include plans, procedures and instructions required for commissioning and start-up, as well as operations and maintenance of the plant, is under way. In August, Utility Building substations and the fire protection system were turned over for systemization testing.



Extra "Hands" Begin to Arrive at Pueblo

In total, eight Cavity Access Machines are being specially built for use at Pueblo. These robots will serve as the "hands" of the Pueblo operations team, allowing staff to remotely access, drain and wash each munition.



Udall Staff Pays PCAPP a Visit

From left, ACWA Program Manager Kevin Flamm, Pueblo Chemical Depot Commander Lt. Col. Robert Wittig and Ms. Jennifer Barrett, Sen. Mark Udall's (D-Colo.) Washington, D.C.-based deputy legislative director/national security adviser, check out Biotreatment Area progress during a recent PCAPP tour for members of Sen. Udall's staff.



With most of its key structures in place, the Pueblo facility's skyline won't experience many more changes. The majority of construction activity will continue to move indoors, as the team prepares each building and installs the equipment and systems that will destroy the Pueblo chemical weapons stockpile.

NEXT 90 DAYS AT ACWA

- ACWA will award a contract to Oak Ridge National Laboratory for the preparation of a new EA, which will address the potential environmental impacts of processing overpacked and reject munitions, boxed 105mm projectiles with M57 fuzes and explosive components of munitions using an EDT. The new EA will be completed in 2011, will address the comments received from Colorado stakeholders from the withdrawn February 2010 assessment, and will include the participation of the Environmental Protection Agency, Region 8. Dates for a public comment period and public meetings will be announced as a timeline for this new EA is developed.
- Blue Grass will turn over its second structure – the Fire Water Pump House – to its start-up group, and at Pueblo, more equipment will be delivered, including the first Projectile Mortar Disassembly system.

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