

Blue Grass *exchange*

A Partnership for Safe Chemical Weapons Destruction



Fall 2009

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Blue Grass Chemical Agent-
Destruction Pilot Plant

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Ironworkers Make Steel "Fly"



Photos by Susan Kahler

Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant construction workers have been busy assembling and installing structural steel on the Control and Support Building foundation, along with work on other various projects. Look inside to see what's going up, what's coming down and how ironworkers make steel "fly."

Messages From the Managers



By JEFF BRUBAKER
Blue Grass Chemical
Agent-Destruction Pilot
Plant Site Project Manager

I think it is fitting that my first column in the *Exchange* newsletter also serves to highlight some very important activities at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP) construction site. In September, the first vertical rebar for the blast area of the Munitions Demilitarization Building (MDB) was installed and the first structural steel on the Control and Support Building (CSB) was placed. These are major milestones for a facility that until now has only been two-dimensional.

At the Sept. 8 Kentucky Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission and Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board meeting, I emphasized my four management philosophy cornerstones of safety, quality, efficiency and sharing of information. The milestones I described in the first paragraph were met through intense focus on all four of these cornerstones, and I intend to enhance that focus as construction progresses.

Our goal is the safe destruction of the chemical weapons stockpile stored at the Blue Grass Army Depot. Meeting this goal requires unwavering concentration on keeping our project workers safe during construction, systemization, processing and closure; maintaining the highest quality standards in everything we do, whether it be reviewing documents, drafting subcontractor agreements, evaluating project materials or performing actual construction; working efficiently; and sharing of information with project stakeholders. I am committed to these steps in achieving our overall goal, and encourage you, the project stakeholder, to learn more about the BGCAPP project and give your support to those working on it.



By MARK SEELY
Bechtel Parsons Blue
Grass Project Manager

I'm particularly impressed with Jeff's commitment to safety, one of the four cornerstones of his management philosophy. We share his commitment. A major safety initiative at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant construction site is our pursuit of "Star Status" under the Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) of the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA). Through the VPP, OSHA recognizes workplaces with excellent safety and health management systems and promotes them as model workplaces.

The program places significant reliance on partnership between workers and management. Statistical evidence for VPP's success is impressive. The average VPP worksite has a lost workday incidence rate 52 percent below the average for its industry. This is due to VPP workers paying extremely close attention to safety and keeping their focus sharp at all times, both on and off the job.

Our team already has an excellent safety record. We have completed more than 4.5 million hours without a lost-time injury, and our recordable injury rate is lower by a factor of ten than the construction industry average. We also have excellent employee involvement through the CATS (Constructive Attitude Toward Safety) team and other initiatives. Through VPP we will make an outstanding safety program even better.

During the next several months our construction team will be working with OSHA to apply for VPP certification. I look forward to sharing more information with you as the process moves forward.

U.S. Army photo

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Design Approval Spurs Construction Activity

By JOHN SCHLATTER
Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass

Major construction focus is on a very specific area at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP) after approval in August by the Department of Defense Explosives Safety Board (DDESB) of the design for the blast containment area of the Munitions Demilitarization Building (MDB).

The MDB is the facility where agent and explosives are removed from the weapons and neutralized. Although the blast containment area only comprises 20 percent of the 87,000-square-foot building, it is the location where explosive components are separated from the chemical munitions, and therefore essential to the safety of the workforce.

When the initial design was submitted, the board requested more data to support the original design, resulting in redesign of portions of the building. While the redesign was being completed, the project team re-sequenced construction to minimize any possible delays. As a result, the project team made good progress in constructing those parts of the building outside the explosive containment area.

The explosive containment area is constructed of thick concrete walls with dense reinforcing steel, or rebar. In preparation for building these walls, the construction team built a “mock wall” to demonstrate techniques for installing rebar and placing a special type of concrete. Core samples were taken from the mock wall to verify that the construction techniques are effective.

In addition to moving ahead with work in the blast area of the MDB, construction is accelerating at numerous other areas of the site. The next six to eight months will see a wide variety of activities:

- Completing Control and Support Building (CSB) steel placement
- Starting structural steel placement for the MDB
- Completing MDB horizontal blast concrete
- Connecting the main electrical substation to the Kentucky Utilities grid
- Installing roofing and siding on the CSB and MDB
- Receiving the Energetics Batch Hydrolyzer and Metal Parts Treater, the first two large pieces of process equipment to arrive at the site

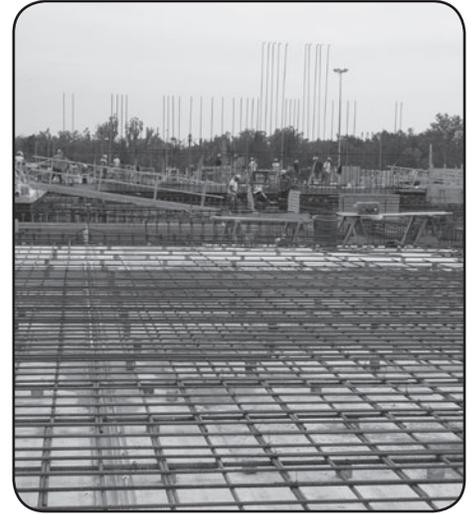


Photo by Susan Kahler

A major change to the landscape at the Munitions Demilitarization Building site is readily noticed now that reinforcing steel installation has gone vertical on the blast containment area.

- Starting construction on the Utility Building
- Installing Utility Power Centers that will distribute electrical power on the plant site

As this work proceeds, safety will continue to be paramount as the construction team works toward “Star Status” in the Voluntary Protection Program of the Occupational Health and Safety Administration.

Activity is intensifying on the blast containment area of the Munitions Demilitarization Building as rebar is installed for the foundation and now the walls of this highly reinforced structure.

Construction Goes Vertical Thanks to BGCAPP Ironworkers

By SUSAN KAHLER
Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office

On Sept. 17, at approximately 2:15 p.m., ironworkers placed the first structural steel on the Control and Support Building (CSB) foundation at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP).

This event marked the first vertical construction on the main building complex of the pilot plant site, and a turning point for construction, as previously the only major vertical construction at the site had been for support buildings and structures.

While many different trades make up the complete construction team building the plant, ironworkers bring a specific skill set to the table that made this milestone possible. The job of an ironworker is to “work” metal, which can mean forming, placing and tying the reinforcing steel, or rebar, which is used for reinforcing concrete in foundations and walls. They also make special parts, known as embeds, that are placed in the concrete walls of facilities to anchor equipment, create doorways or make space for cables and piping.

Ironworkers also stage and place structural steel to create the framework that supports buildings and the



Photos by Susan Kahler

From left to right, cranes lift structural steel frames into place and fasten them together with girders to complete the first self-supporting structure on the Control and Support Building foundation.

equipment contained within them. They use specialized tools such as an “icky bar,” which bends rebar, “spud wrenches” to align holes for bolts, “rod choppers” to cut rebar and “sleever bars” to move iron into place, as well as #9 Klein pliers to cut and twist rebar tie wire.

For the CSB structural steel placement, ironworkers coordinated with laborers to bring in wooden mats so that the crane used to place the structural steel could move into place. They then worked with crane operators to further prepare the ground with gravel and then direct the operators to precisely place the steel. This teamwork is integral to ensuring accuracy, as well as the project’s important priority, safety.

This vertical construction is the first of many that will continue during the next several years as construction on the CSB and Munitions Demilitarization Building continues, and BGCAPP ironworkers will be there every step of the way. Job opportunities in the ironworker trade at the site will continue to grow, as the construction team has ramped up hiring in light of increased structural steel work in the near future.

Information on these and other opportunities can be found on the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives Web site at www.pmacwa.army.mil on the *Job and Business Opportunities* page.

The knowledge and skills of the workers placing rebar in the blast area of the Munitions Demilitarization Building (MDB) have been honed by the lessons learned from the mock wall, a wall built to the same specifications as the MDB blast area for instructional purposes.

A Day in the Life of an Ironworker

An ironworker's skill set comes from both training and on-the-job experience. The Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP) employs trained and experienced ironworkers, who have honed their skills through coursework or apprenticeships. More than 40 ironworkers are on site at BGCAPP. These men and women, who have embraced Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass's unwavering focus on safety, are providing a solid foundation and structure to the project. Read on to meet a few BGCAPP ironworkers and learn about some of the daily activities they contribute to at the pilot plant construction site.



Chris Elam, Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass ironworker, credits the teamwork at the pilot plant construction site for the quality work and safe practices that are ongoing at the site.

Chris is assisting in the staging of structural steel that will be used to construct part of the Control and Support Building. As steel arrives on site, it is staged (put in appropriate places) for the upcoming jobs that require it. This makes for greater efficiency when a job is being performed.

Bill Parson, rebar general foreman, and his five brothers followed in the footsteps of their father, who introduced them all to iron work. His suggestion to newcomers to the field is to "listen to the old guys."

Bill is pointing out a specific junction in the vertical rebar for the blast area of the Munitions Demilitarization Building to B.J. Clark, union steward for the Ironworkers Local Union No. 70 (Louisville).



Sean Ellery, a journeyman ironworker with the Ironworkers Local Union No. 70 (Louisville), said it is eye-opening to be working on the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant facility, due to the focus on safety.

Sean is shown making a steel girder "fly" – move with a crane from one place to another – in preparation for the first structural steel placement on the Control and Support Building foundation.



Lisa Lauderdale, an ironworker rod buster (rebar specialist), works on the pilot plant project with her husband John, also a rod buster. She credits their union with finding a project where they can work together, and they carpool from the Louisville area to the job site.

Lisa and coworker Jesse McIntosh, rod buster from the Ironworkers Local Union No. 769 (Ashland), evaluate placement of complicated rebar structures for the Munitions Demilitarization Building blast area.



Site Tours Highlight Progress

By DEBRA HOGAN
Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office

The end of summer meant lots of tours for the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant, including site tours for U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and U.S. Rep. Ben Chandler (D-KY, 6th District) in August and members of the Kentucky Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission (CAC), and its subcommittee Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board (CDCAB), in September.

Congressional Tour

During the August congressional tour, Sen. McConnell and Rep. Chandler, along with other key stakeholders and media representatives, visited the pilot plant construction site to view progress. Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Chemical & Biological Defense and Chemical Demilitarization) Jean Reed accompanied the congressmen on their tour, and briefed them on the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives program. Col. Joseph Tirone, Blue Grass Army Depot commander and Lt. Col. David Musgrave, Blue Grass Chemical Activity commander, also visited with the congressmen and participated in the tour.

Jeff Brubaker, site project manager; Mark Seely, Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass (BPBG) project manager and Gary Cough, BPBG site construction manager, updated the congressmen on the project and led the group on a windshield tour of points of interest.

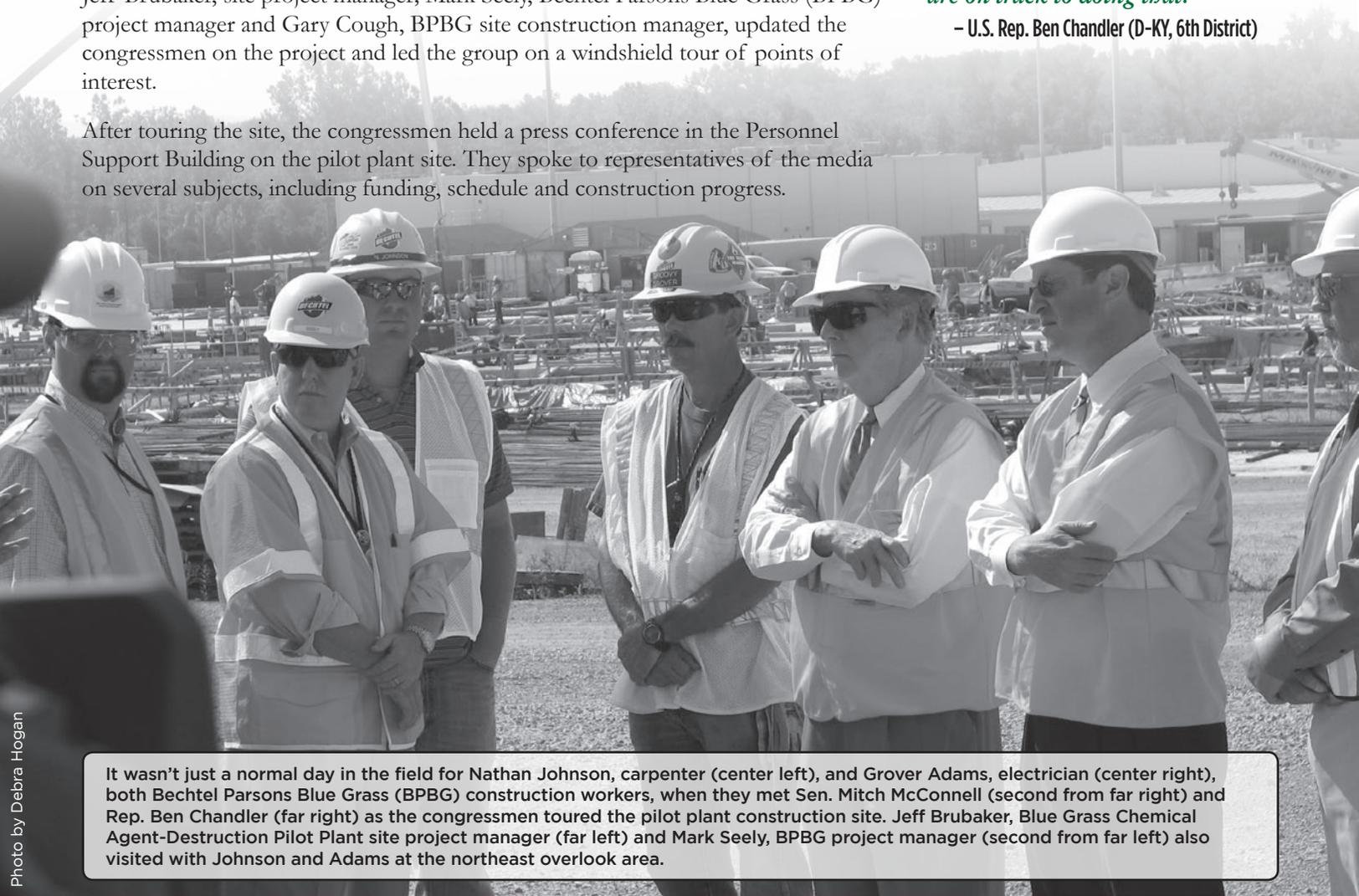
After touring the site, the congressmen held a press conference in the Personnel Support Building on the pilot plant site. They spoke to representatives of the media on several subjects, including funding, schedule and construction progress.

"In addition to getting rid of these dangerous weapons, [the demilitarization project] will be a great job generator for our state."

— Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY)

"This is one issue that has immediate impact on the people we represent—their health, their safety, their welfare—and it's incredibly important for us to push this through to fruition, to ultimately get these weapons destroyed, and we are on track to doing that."

— U.S. Rep. Ben Chandler (D-KY, 6th District)



It wasn't just a normal day in the field for Nathan Johnson, carpenter (center left), and Grover Adams, electrician (center right), both Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass (BPBG) construction workers, when they met Sen. Mitch McConnell (second from far right) and Rep. Ben Chandler (far right) as the congressmen toured the pilot plant construction site. Jeff Brubaker, Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant site project manager (far left) and Mark Seely, BPBG project manager (second from far left) also visited with Johnson and Adams at the northeast overlook area.

Kentucky Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission and Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board Tour

In September, approximately 15 commission and advisory board members attended their annual site tour to view construction progress at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant site.

The governor-appointed Kentucky Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission, or CAC, serves as a bridge between the community and the government by providing a forum for exchanging information about chemical weapons disposal. Its mission is to "provide a mechanism for the thorough and objective exchange of information among the citizens of Kentucky, the Army and other organizations involved in the chemical weapons demilitarization program." The Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board (CDCAB) is a subset of the CAC and represents the local community on issues regarding the chemical weapons destruction project.

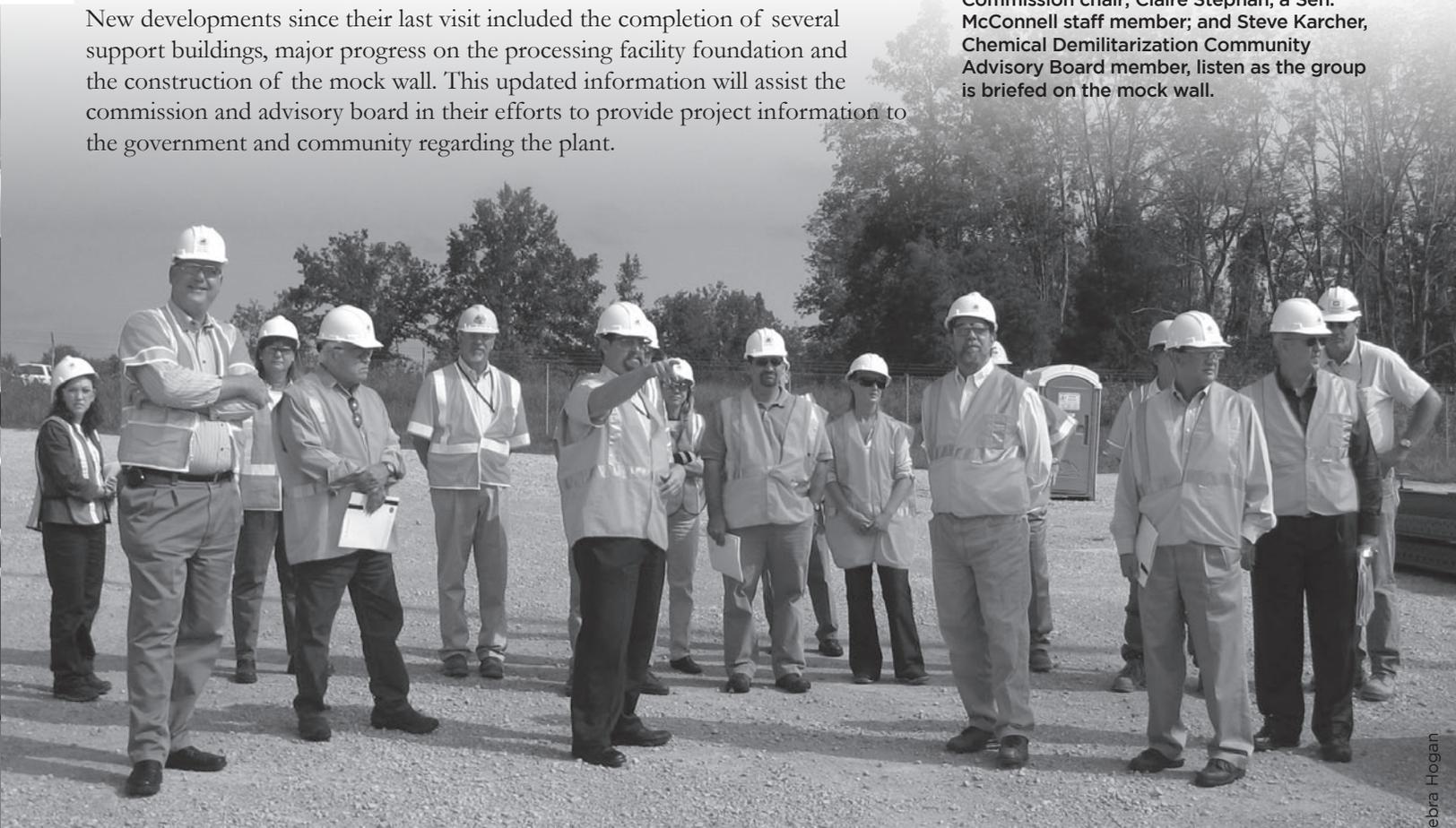
As the group was briefed at an overlook on the northwest side of the site, Craig Williams, CDCAB co-chair, said, "It is exciting to see the progress that has been made at the site since the group's last visit. It looks quite different now, with foundations, support structures and utility work, and is really starting to take shape."

New developments since their last visit included the completion of several support buildings, major progress on the processing facility foundation and the construction of the mock wall. This updated information will assist the commission and advisory board in their efforts to provide project information to the government and community regarding the plant.



Photo by Debra Hogan

Focusing on site construction progress, from left, Doug Hindman, Citizens' Advisory Commission chair; Claire Stephan, a Sen. McConnell staff member; and Steve Karcher, Chemical Demilitarization Community Advisory Board member, listen as the group is briefed on the mock wall.



Commission and advisory board members received an overview on the construction progress at the site and were briefed on the construction team's focus on safety, site layout, schedule, current construction activities and expected progress.

Information | Exchange

The Blue Grass *Exchange* is designed to keep you up to date on the chemical weapons destruction project. Submit your feedback and potential story ideas by contacting the editor, Susan Kahler, by phone at (859) 626-8944 or e-mail at bgoutreach@bah.com.

Online Resources

Find out more about the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) program's mission to safely destroy the chemical weapons stockpiles located at the Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky., and U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot, Colo., by visiting www.pmacwa.army.mil. Interested stakeholders may provide feedback to the program by clicking on the "Give Feedback" icon.

Additional information regarding chemical weapons destruction in Colorado and Kentucky can be found at the following Web sites:

- ACWA Photostream on Flickr: www.flickr.com/photos/acwa
- ACWA YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/usaeacwa

You may also subscribe to the ACWA Real Simple Syndication, or RSS, feed by visiting http://www.pmacwa.army.mil/connect/acwa_rss.html.

Mark Your Calendar

Your involvement is essential to the success of the project. Please share your views at the Kentucky Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission and Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board meetings. Upcoming meetings are scheduled for **Dec. 8, 2009** and **March 9, 2010** at **1:30 p.m.** in the **Carl D. Perkins Building, Rooms A and B** at **Eastern Kentucky University**.

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