

Blue Grass *exchange*

A Partnership for Safe Chemical Weapons Destruction



Winter 2008

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Blue Grass Chemical Agent-
Destruction Pilot Plant

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Brandon Bellamy, Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass, removes the form around a light pole base at the workforce parking lot adjacent to the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant facility worksite. The light pole foundations are connected by a network of underground utilities, and when the light poles are installed and activated, they will provide the site with an extra layer of security and safety.

Photo by Stephanie Parrett

Message From the Managers



By JIM FRITSCHÉ
Blue Grass Chemical
Agent-Destruction
Pilot Plant Site Project
Manager



By MARK SEELY
Bechtel Parsons Blue
Grass Project Manager

In the months ahead, you will hear a lot about Operation *Swift Solution*, a project that the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) program has undertaken to destroy the contents of three deteriorating steel containers currently in storage at the Blue Grass Chemical Activity (see Page 3 for more information). The effort will be an important priority this spring for ACWA, which is the Department of Defense program responsible for the destruction of the Kentucky chemical weapons stockpile.

On behalf of ACWA leadership, we want to take this opportunity to highlight two aspects of Operation *Swift Solution*. First, the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP) team's tradition of safety will be incorporated into this new initiative to protect the workers, the community and the environment. Second, Operation *Swift Solution* will not detract from the progress of the pilot plant. It is being implemented in a manner that will allow us as project managers, as well as the BGCAPP team, to remain fully focused on designing and building the pilot plant. This is critical, as we have important work ahead of us.

The Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass design team of approximately 200 engineers has been located at the Parsons corporate office in Pasadena, Calif., to take advantage of the extensive experience available in the various engineering disciplines. The team has submitted final design packages for the three major processing buildings – munitions demilitarization building, control support building, and supercritical water oxidation processing

building. As they complete design of the three most complex buildings, the team is relocating to Richmond to finish designing the balance of the plant.

The Richmond engineering staff will be about 45 people and will include workers from the Pasadena office, as well as local hires. To accommodate the increased staff, Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass is leasing additional office space in two buildings near the current project office on Highland Park Drive.

While the engineering staff is making this transition, the construction team continues to make good progress. Current work includes parking lot lighting, excavation and installation, and storm drain, fire water, and electrical duct bank installations. Work is also beginning on the personnel support building, maintenance building and badging facility.

The first Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board meeting of the year is scheduled for March 11 at 1:30 p.m. at Eastern Kentucky University's Perkins Building. We invite you to stop by for an update and provide us with your feedback on the project.

News Brief

Acceleration Assessment Under Way

Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) has initiated an assessment of potential opportunities for accelerating the destruction of the Colorado and Kentucky chemical weapons stockpiles. This assessment is in response to requirements included in Public Law 110-116, which mandates completing the destruction of the chemical weapons stockpile in accordance with the deadline established by the Chemical Weapons Convention (April 27, 2012), but under no circumstances later than Dec. 31, 2017. Defense Department officials will meet with Congress by summer to discuss the acceleration options and come to an agreement on the path forward.

Operation *Swift Solution* to Eliminate Unnecessary Risk to Workforce

By STEPHANIE PARRETT
Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office

The Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives program, known as ACWA, held a public meeting on Jan. 15, 2008 to discuss the destruction of three deteriorating steel containers stored at the Blue Grass Army Depot.

The destruction effort, known as Operation *Swift Solution*, will eliminate the risks associated with long-term monitoring of the steel containers until they can be destroyed at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant.

“The steel containers pose a potential risk to the government workers who must monitor them and to the contractor workforce building the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant,” said Kevin Flamm, ACWA program manager. “The continued presence of these containers has the potential to disrupt the pilot plant construction schedule and is at best an unnecessary distraction for the workforce.”

The mission is being coordinated by ACWA, the Blue Grass Army Depot, the Blue Grass Chemical Activity, the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, the U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center, the Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection and local stakeholders.

ACWA is employing a team from the U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center to use the Chemical Agent Transfer System (CHATS) to drain and neutralize the combination of agent GB, GB breakdown products and decontamination fluids currently stored in the containers. Once empty, they will be decontaminated, cut in two and recycled.

The CHATS has successfully destroyed the contents of more than 2,000 steel containers at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., and Newport Chemical Depot, Ind.

“The CHATS has a good track record for this application, and experienced staff will operate and monitor operations,” said Flamm. “We will have mobile analytical equipment on site to allow us to test and ensure that the contents of the containers are neutralized. The recipe to neutralize the contents of the containers is the same that will be used for the pilot plant facility.”

The operation is expected to run through late spring 2008 and cost approximately \$2 million.

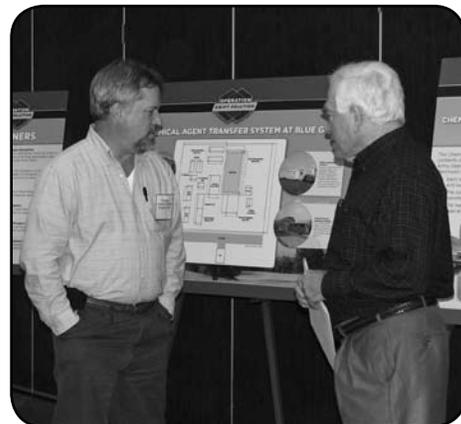


Photo by Meg Schnebly

Tim Blades, left, of the U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center, and Robert Miller, of the Kentucky Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission, discuss the Chemical Agent Transfer System at a recent public information meeting at Eastern Kentucky University.

Emergency Exercise Prepares Workforce

The Blue Grass Chemical Activity, Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant and Kentucky Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) communities practiced their skills to respond to a chemical agent incident during an annual exercise in 2007. In this test scenario, Blue Grass Chemical Activity workers were re-warehousing a partially filled steel container from an old spill containment pan to a new one. The container was dropped, causing a mixture of GB nerve agent, GB breakdown products and decontamination fluid to spill on the floor of the igloo. All participating agencies received high remarks from the test evaluators on their responses.

“In looking back at how we responded to the test scenario in the exercise, I'm confident that my workforce is ready to take on the challenges associated with the transportation of the steel containers during Operation *Swift Solution*,” said Lt. Col. Tom Closs, Blue Grass Chemical Activity commander.



Photo by Bob Norville,
Dept. of Homeland Security

Lt. Col. Tom Closs, front, Blue Grass Chemical Activity commander, answers questions from a team of mock media experts during the emergency preparedness exercise. Michael Bryant, back left, Madison County CSEPP director, and Rebecca Toy, Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office manager, also participate in the mock press conference.

Clearing the Way for Construction

By MIA SCHARPER
ACWA Public Affairs Team

Laying the Foundation: Site Preparation Complete

Workers at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant completed numerous site preparation and engineering projects during 2007 to make way for substantial construction, which will begin this year and extend to 2015. The projects below will provide the foundation for construction projects that are on the horizon.

- Prepared the pilot plant site by clearing and grubbing, leveling to rough grade, and adding stone
- Completed the access control building and access road, including perimeter fencing, lighting and other electrical work on the roadway and installation of vehicle barriers
- Prepared for the munitions demilitarization building and control support building by excavating to bedrock (nearly 20 feet of excavation in some areas) and filling in with dense graded aggregate
- Completed craft change house, a multifunctional building with office, storage and gathering space
- Began initial tie-in to communications to the depot, including telephone service and electrical power
- Started placing underground utilities, such as gas lines, storm drains and sewer pipes



Photo courtesy of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Subcontractors prepare for construction of the munitions demilitarization building by excavating and backfilling with dense graded aggregate.



Photo courtesy of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Pilot plant construction workers install underground electrical communication cables.



Photo by Stephanie Parrett

Blue Grass Army Depot security guards, who provide security for the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant, relocated to the new access control building.



Photo by Rebecca Toy

The vehicle control barriers serve as a second layer of security for the pilot plant facility.



Photo by Rebecca Toy

The craft change house provides construction workers with a facility to fabricate materials needed on site to complete tasks and a location to host workforce safety meetings.



Photo by Stephanie Parrett

Anthony Cauldwell, left, and Kenneth Jones work to install the perimeter fencing around the pilot plant site.

Photo by Stephanie Parrett

Taking the Next Steps: Building on the Foundation

Construction in 2008 will focus on a range of efforts, including the following:

- Continuing to place underground utilities, such as gas lines, storm drains and sewer pipes
- Erecting substantial canopy covers to protect truck and car inspection areas at the access control building
- Constructing a badging facility near the access control building
- Placing horizontal concrete for the munitions demilitarization building and control support building
- Fabricating and erecting the maintenance building (a metal building) and personnel support building (a modular building)
- Mobilizing to begin a substation and transmission lines for electricity distribution

“2008 will be an exciting year for the project as the pilot plant main construction site continues to take shape with the placement of horizontal concrete for the main destruction facility and the assembly of two new support buildings.”

*- Gary Cough,
BGCAPP construction manager*



Photo by Rebecca Toy

A Two-Way Exchange

Community Weighs In on Weapons Destruction Project

By STEPHANIE PARRETT
Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office

Openness, transparency and feedback are key words for the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) program.

“We have a long history of involving the community and engaging them in important decisions,” said Kathy DeWeese, public affairs officer for the ACWA program. “We value the open door policy and welcome any community feedback.”

ACWA and Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP) staff members are always available at the quarterly Kentucky Chemical Demilitarization Citizens’ Advisory Commission (CAC) and Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board (CDCAB) meetings. Staff members are also available at various events to share information and to engage in conversation with stakeholders.

“Last April during a CDCAB meeting, it became clear that the community wanted more information related to the technology selected to destroy the Blue Grass chemical weapons stockpile,” said DeWeese. “As a result, our public affairs team developed information to better explain neutralization followed by supercritical water oxidation, and focused on sharing that during speaking events.”

Comment cards are placed in the Blue Grass *Exchange* newsletter, project update mailers and various information products, which are mailed to stakeholders’ homes. More than 13,000 comment cards were mailed to the Blue Grass community in

fiscal year 2007 (Oct. 1, 2006 to Sept. 30, 2007), with 24 returned. At special events, more than 620 feedback forms were distributed, with 117 returned during that same period.

“We read every comment and question that stakeholders submit,” said DeWeese. “The feedback received is considered when leaders make decisions regarding the program.”



Photo by Stephanie Parrett

Lt. Eric Davis, left, Kentucky State Police, and Rebecca Toy, Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office manager, discuss the chemical weapons destruction project at a recent public meeting.

Here’s what your neighbors are saying:

“All efforts should be made to destroy the chemical weapons safely as soon as possible. Delays are unacceptable in this populated area. Please continue efforts to secure funding.” – Sandra, Berea

The many competing requirements of national defense demand a continuing balance of cost and schedule, as well as a storage program that will closely monitor the stockpile and ensure long-term safety. ACWA was originally directed to destroy the chemical weapons at Blue Grass and Pueblo, Colo., as quickly as possible, while exercising maximum safety. However, the destruction schedule was recently extended to make the program more affordable on an annual basis with the same emphasis on safety. Currently, ACWA is conducting an assessment to evaluate options for accelerating the program. More information on this assessment can be found on Page 2 of this edition of the Exchange.

“I’m interested in knowing how you will impact our local economy, financially. Will you rent office space, warehousing or other space?” – Kelly, Richmond

The BGCAPP team rents office space in the community for the project and outreach office, and its new engineering office located on Commercial Drive in Richmond. However, our impact to the local economy goes beyond renting office space. In fact, 57 percent of all contracts awarded for the BGCAPP project have gone to Kentucky businesses. ACWA and Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass work diligently to provide community members, potential subcontractors and suppliers with information about how to get involved in the BGCAPP project. For example, in December 2007, the Blue Grass outreach team published and distributed a project update highlighting job opportunities and ways that local vendors can become involved with BGCAPP.

Local Water Source to Supply Chemical Destruction Facility During Operations

By JOHN SCHLATTER
Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass

Water will be a key ingredient for operations at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, based out of Louisville, is completing work on the dam to ensure that there is an ample supply available to meet the need.

Lake Vega, a 135-acre reservoir with a capacity of 600 million gallons, is located on the Blue Grass Army Depot. The Army owns and operates its own treatment plant, which has supplied the depot with water since 1942. In 2004, Blue Grass Army Depot officials discovered water loss and water flow problems in some questionable areas below the dam and took action to ensure that the water supply was protected. Depot officials engaged the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to complete a study, develop recommendations and cost estimates. In addition the engineering firm, Fuller, Mossbarger, Scott & May, conducted field studies, soil analysis and other technical work to support the study.



Photo Courtesy of Blue Grass Army Depot

Water is the primary substance that will be used to neutralize the chemical weapons stored at the Blue Grass Army Depot. Lake Vega, the depot's reservoir, can supply the pilot plant with this resource during operations along with meeting the depot's daily usage.

After receiving the final study in January 2006, the Blue Grass Army Depot sought and obtained Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization funding totaling \$8.5 million in September 2006. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers office was awarded the contract to repair the dam.

Once repairs are complete, Lake Vega and the Army's treatment plant will be able to provide more than enough water to meet the needs of the depot, while also supplying the chemical destruction plant with water when it begins operation.

Water is one of the primary chemicals used to neutralize the chemical agents in the pilot plant facility. It is also used for many other purposes, such as dust control during construction, cleaning and rinsing various tanks, keeping equipment cool and supplying the fire suppression system. Water will be recycled back into the plant whenever possible.

On average, more than 200,000 gallons of water per day will be available from Lake Vega to serve the pilot plant, which will use an average of 167,000 gallons per day when in operation. The destruction facility is expected to use approximately 86 million gallons of water.

Chemical Activity Breaks Ground for New Lab

Blue Grass Chemical Activity Commander Lt. Col. Tom Closs and staff members Tom Bilyeu, Bonnie McCoy and Chris Chasteen break ground for a new laboratory that will provide analytical support for the Blue Grass Chemical Activity and Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP) during construction. The lab will double the capabilities of the current lab and is expected to be completed this summer.



Photo by Rebecca Toy

Information | *Exchange*

The Blue Grass *Exchange* is designed to keep you up to date on the chemical weapons destruction project. The *Exchange* newsletter welcomes feedback and story ideas. Contact the editor, Stephanie Parrett, by phone at (859) 626-8944 or e-mail at bgoutreach@bah.com.

Virtual Information | *Exchange*

Find out more about ACWA's mission to safely destroy the chemical weapons stockpiles located at Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky., and Pueblo Chemical Depot, Colo., by visiting www.pmacwa.army.mil.

Current and past editions of the Blue Grass and Pueblo *Exchange* can also be found online. To locate the newsletters, click on the Information Products link and then on the word "Newsletters."

Mark Your Calendar

Your involvement is essential to the success of the project. Please share your views at the Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board meetings. The meetings in 2008 are scheduled for **March 11, June 10, September 9** and **December 9** at **1:30 p.m.** in the **Carl D. Perkins Building, rooms A and B** at **Eastern Kentucky University**.

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