



Message from Program Executive Officer Conrad Whyne

The United States is one significant step closer to destroying the chemical weapons stored at the Blue Grass Army Depot, near Richmond, Kentucky. This summer, the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant reached substantial construction completion of the 19-acre facility. Although some final construction tasks remain, the project is shifting to the systemization phase to test all aspects of the integrated systems that make up the plant. In addition to systems testing, standard operating procedures will be developed, and the operational staff will be hired and trained. The substantial completion of construction is an important milestone for our program, but our focus moving forward is the ramp-up of systemization and the countdown to initiation of plant operations. I encourage you to click on the time-lapse video at the link below for a look at the past five years of progress.



CONRAD F. WHYNE
Program Executive Officer
Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives



Watch: Fast Forward Five: Blue Grass Construction from 2010–2015

Static Detonation Chamber Arrives at Blue Grass Plant

Another marker in the progress of the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant was the August arrival of the Static Detonation Chamber or SDC. In 2013, the SDC was chosen as the method to destroy the Blue Grass stockpile of mustard munitions after testing revealed agent solidification in many of these aging artillery projectiles. Since then, the SDC has undergone design, environmental permitting, site construction and Factory Acceptance Testing. The Factory Acceptance Test totaled thousands of man-hours of preparation, two full weeks of actual testing, and hundreds of man-hours of data review and approval to ensure the system will meet its intended purpose. Prior to the SDC's 2017 scheduled start of destruction operations, the system will undergo a Site Acceptance Test and an Operational Readiness Review – two processes designed to ensure both the SDC and its operators are prepared to begin destroying the Blue Grass mustard stockpile.



The Static Detonation Chamber components arrived at Blue Grass on Aug. 10. The Explosive Destruction Technology site is currently under construction and installation of the components will begin later this year.



View: SDC Photos on Flickr



ACWA Snapshot: Progress in Motion at Anniston Field Office

PLANTS-AT-A-GLANCE

AS OF SEPT. 30, 2015



PUEBLO CHEMICAL AGENT-DESTRUCTION PILOT PLANT

- Destruction technology: **Neutralization/Biotreatment**
- Construction complete: **100%**
- Systemization complete: **89%**
- Explosive Destruction Technology operations began: **2015**
- Main plant operations begin: **2016**
- Local project employment: **1,285**
- Local payroll paid to date: **\$1.04 billion**
- Anticipated end of destruction operations: **2019**



BLUE GRASS CHEMICAL AGENT-DESTRUCTION PILOT PLANT

- Destruction technology: **Neutralization/Supercritical Water Oxidation**
- Construction complete: **98%**
- Systemization complete: **38%**
- Explosive Destruction Technology operations begin: **2017**
- Main plant operations begin: **2020**
- Local project employment: **1,185**
- Local payroll paid to date: **\$772 million**
- Anticipated end of destruction operations: **2023**



About PEO ACWA

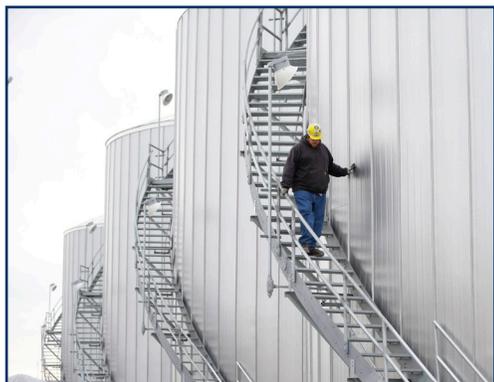
The Program Executive Office, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, is responsible for managing the safe and environmentally sound destruction of the chemical weapons stockpiles stored at the Blue Grass Army Depot in Kentucky and the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot in Colorado.

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IN OTHER NEWS...



A worker descends the steps of one of the Hydrolysate Storage Tanks at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant. Hydrolysate, a by-product of neutralization, will be held in the tanks until it is transferred to the Supercritical Water Oxidation Processing building for treatment.

National Academies Releases Report on Blue Grass Hydrolysate

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, formerly the National Research Council, released their study titled “Review Criteria for Successful Treatment of Hydrolysate at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant” on Sept. 9. The study shares the assessment of the Program Executive Office, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives that on-site hydrolysate treatment at the Blue Grass facility should be able to perform successfully as designed. However, if technical difficulties arise, the National Academies’ key recommendation – with which we concur – is that the program ensures a transparent consultation process where meaningful community input is allowed into the analysis, evaluation and decision criteria should the off-site shipment of hydrolysate emerge as a potential remedy – a contingency regarded by all as a “Plan B.” A similar study was completed for the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant in March 2015.



[Read: Review Criteria for Successful Treatment of Hydrolysate at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant](#)



[Read: Review Criteria for Successful Treatment of Hydrolysate at the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant](#)



[Read: Blue Grass Study Released](#)



[Watch: Hydrolysate Tanks Fill a Need at Blue Grass Plant](#)



A repair technician from Grayloc Products welds the Explosive Destruction System to repair the door seal surface that was damaged on Aug. 6.

Crews Complete Welding Repairs on Pueblo’s Explosive Destruction System

In September, contract technicians completed welding repairs to the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant Explosive Destruction System, or PCAPP EDS, following damage to the door seal. Under the watchful eye of a certified examiner, employees with Grayloc Products performed rough machining, followed by welding to repair the seal surface. On Aug. 7, system operators discovered the damage during routine vessel cleanout operations following the last successful operation. Procedures and safeguards functioned as designed and there were no injuries or agent releases. Prior to this unplanned downtime, the PCAPP EDS surpassed the halfway point in its initial campaign by destroying 347 of the 560 chemical munitions and Department of Transportation bottles identified for elimination.

Editor’s Note: On Oct. 5, the PCAPP EDS successfully resumed operations with the destruction of four 155mm projectiles containing the chemical agent mustard.



[Read: Latest Updates on PCAPP EDS](#)



[Watch: PCAPP Explosive Destruction System: The First Step in Eliminating Munitions](#)



Three waste operators wear protective masks at the ready. As of July 20, everyone who works in the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant masking zone is required to carry protective masks, worn slung across their body.

Pueblo Plant Employees Train, Test and Prepare for Operations

Systemization at the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant rapidly progresses, and the preparation for operations is underway. The Bechtel Pueblo Team has started completing fundamental steps to prepare the people, infrastructure and technology for operations. Those actions range from ensuring proper certification and training of operators, conducting drills in the event of a loss of power and optimizing systems through formal exercises. To date, 61,352 training assignments, or 90 percent of required training in topics ranging from the PCAPP Observation Program to Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response, have been completed.



[Read: 26 Engineers are COGs that Keep PCAPP Train Moving](#)



[Read: Fundamental Steps Prepare Pueblo Plant for Operations](#)



[Watch: Unpacking Munitions: Early Baseline Reconfiguration](#)



[Watch: PCAPP Rescue Training](#)