



Pueblo Chemical Stockpile Destruction Project Granted Environmental Permit

A Partnership for Safe Chemical Weapons Destruction

July 1, 2004

No. 04-01

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Close Coordination Between Federal, State and Local Agencies, Bechtel Pueblo Team and Pueblo-Area Community Results in Timely Permitting

PUEBLO CHEMICAL DEPOT, Colo. – Initial construction of the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant is one step closer following today's issuance of a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, or RCRA, permit by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. The plant will destroy a stockpile of chemical weapons containing mustard agent stored at the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot, located east of the City of Pueblo.

The permit will become effective within 30 days. Known as a Research, Development and Demonstration permit under the RCRA program, it allows site civil work to begin, such as clearing, grading, underground utility work, road paving, and establishment of construction support areas. Construction is expected to begin in late summer, and will continue while the plant design is finalized by the government's contractor, Bechtel National, Inc., which will also build, test, operate and ultimately close the plant.

"The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment has been truly diligent in ensuring that this project is protective of human health and the environment," said Gary M. Anderson, government site project manager. "At the same time, they've balanced that primary objective with clear support for the mission to destroy the chemical weapons stockpile as soon as possible."

Bechtel Pueblo Project Manager Michael J. Lewis agreed and added, "We were able to obtain this important permit in a timely manner by partnering with the community and being open and transparent with the regulators and all stakeholders. I thank the Pueblo community for being actively involved in the permitting process."

The Pueblo Chemical Depot has safely stored its stockpile of chemical weapons for more than 50 years. "The depot has been and continues to be an important part of the Pueblo community – not only in its last mission of the safe, secure storage and destruction of the chemical stockpile entrusted to its care, but to future use of the depot," said Lt. Col. John A. Becker, depot commander. "This step forward is important to the depot workers, past, present and future."

Subsequent modifications to the permit, which must be approved by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, will allow for completion of construction and pilot testing of the facility.

-30-

News Release