

Alternative technology chosen to destroy Kentucky chemical weapons stockpile

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – Neutralization followed by supercritical water oxidation, known as “SCWO,” has been designated as the technology for full-scale pilot testing for destruction of the chemical weapons stockpile stored at the Blue Grass Army Depot near Richmond, Ky.

Department of Defense (DOD) officials approved neutralization followed by SCWO, after consideration of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Destruction of Chemical Weapons at Blue Grass Army Depot (FEIS), and conclusions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for selection of a technology.

This authorizes the Program Manager Assembled Chemical Weapons Assessment (ACWA) to move forward with a request for proposal soliciting contractors to submit proposals to design, construct, pilot test, operate and close a full-scale pilot test facility at the depot where two percent of the nation’s chemical weapons stockpile is stored, and to complete all NEPA requirements to enable construction.

ACWA is also directed to accelerate destruction of the Blue Grass stockpile, including streamlining the source selection process and optimizing the environmental permitting process.

DOD designated neutralization followed by SCWO as the agency-preferred alternative in November 2002, which was published in the FEIS. The evaluation process for this decision considered the incineration process and three alternative technologies: two versions of neutralization followed by SCWO and electrochemical oxidation with silver and nitric acid.

The Blue Grass technology decision will be documented in a final Record of Decision, which will complete the NEPA process for technology selection.

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