



# NEWS RELEASE

**Anniston Chemical Activity**



September 19, 2012

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## **ADEM REVIEWS ANCDF SELF-REPORTED CONCERNS, ISSUES NOTICE**

ANNISTON ARMY DEPOT, Ala. (September 19, 2012) - The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) has issued a proposed Administrative Order (AO) citing the Anniston Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (ANCDF) for items ANCDF self reported to ADEM. The AO addresses items from a Notice of Violation (NOV) issued in March of this year as well as permit violations ANCDF managers reported to ADEM reference Static Detonation Chamber operations not included in the NOV.

All items were corrected by ANCDF personnel prior to any action by ADEM.

"We have a very proactive quality control and quality assurance program at the ANCDF," said Timothy K. Garrett, ANCDF government site project manager. "We work with State regulators on site and in Montgomery. When we see something that is askew we correct it as well as report it."

The March NOV covered the following issues at the ANCDF:

- In December 2011, operators discovered that eight drums of mixed metal oxides, sent for disposal at a hazardous waste landfill in May 2011, contained low levels of mercury. Though the waste met all final standards for disposal, the waste should have been sent for pre-treatment to remove the mercury for recycling before it was stabilized and landfilled at a hazardous waste facility.

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- On two separate occasions in the fall of 2011, a ventilation filter unit was operated without being monitored for chemical agent between the carbon charcoal filter mid-beds as required by the site's permit. While there was a lapse in agent monitoring of the ventilation filter mid-beds, monitoring of the exhaust stack continued uninterrupted. However, though monitoring at the mid-bed did not occur, there are five carbon filter beds in each filter unit and records from the stack monitors verified that no agent was released during the periods when monitoring was not being conducted within the ventilation filters.

ADEM also cited the ANCDF for self-reported permit violations associated with the Static Detonation Chamber (SDC) which were not included within a NOV. The SDC is a small system that was used to demilitarize the portion of the Anniston chemical munitions stockpile that could not be readily or easily processed using the robotic equipment in the ANCDF.

The SDC is currently destroying conventional munitions as part of a study to determine all of the long-range maintenance parameters of the SDC.

The self reported violations for the operation of the SDC were:

- Incorrect programming in the feed control system resulted in a permitted system not being available as required. No waste or agent feed limitations were exceeded during this period.
- Average carbon monoxide emissions (CO) reported were not accurate due to an error in the program used for the calculation of the emissions. The programming error resulted in munitions being processed while emissions were above the hourly average limit for CO. However, instantaneous emissions were accurately reported and tracked at all times. At no time were munitions fed with an instantaneous reading above the limit.

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Garrett points out, however, that an Administrative Order and a Notice of Violation does not mean or imply that disposal operations resulted in the contamination of the local environment. "Our technology and our operators ensured the protection of the community, the environment, and the work force. There was never any chemical agent emitted to the environment," Garrett said.

Anniston Army Depot was the location for the storage of more than 7 percent of the U.S. inventory of chemical munitions. Safe demilitarization of the stockpile began in August 2003. Eight years later, ANCDF operators had demilitarized all 661,529 nerve agent munitions and mustard agent munitions. The ANCDF is now being prepared for demolition of the areas where the chemical munitions were handled, disassembled, and destroyed. The site could be closed in 2014.

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