

PROGRESS UPDATE

August 2006

For more information, contact the U.S. Army Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility Public Affairs Office, (410) 436-5253; the Bechtel Aberdeen Public Affairs Office, (410) 436-9504; or the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency's toll free number, (800) 488-0648.



ABCDF UPDATE

- **ABCDF closure phase is ahead of schedule.** Demolition of the Ton Container Cleanout (TCC) building is more than 50 percent complete. Workers cleaned and decontaminated emptied containers of mustard agent through an 11-step automated process within the building using highly pressurized hot water and steam to remove residual mustard agent from inside the containers. Facility personnel safely removed all 11 modules in the conveyor line. The Army now estimates that lower levels of contamination will allow workers to turn off the air handling system that filters air within the TCC building through a bank of filters, by late summer, sooner than originally scheduled. This represents a big step toward project completion.

Decontamination and demolition in the Process Neutralization Building is almost 50 percent complete. Workers drained mustard agent from steel containers and destroyed the agent through a hot water neutralization process in this building. The Army expects to be able to achieve the level of decontamination required for turning off its air handling system in early 2007.

- **Safety remains ABCDF's top priority as waste processing efforts continue.** Secondary waste such as spent carbon filters, insulation, cleaning material and equipment parts such as gaskets and hoses were generated during mustard agent destruction activities at the ABCDF. Some of these wastes have come into contact with agent and have been decontaminated, while others may still contain trace levels of agent. ABCDF has treated its secondary waste safely both on site at ABCDF and off site at permitted treatment, storage and disposal facilities since operations began in April 2003. All waste disposal efforts are closely coordinated with the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and in accordance with stringent MDE, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Transportation standards. All waste, agent-contaminated or non-contaminated, is profiled to ensure that all workers, the public and the environment are safeguarded.

- **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) recognizes public outreach efforts.** The Maryland Chapter of PRSA recognized the Army for its "A Safer Maryland Today" public outreach campaign at its 2006 Best in Maryland awards on June 29. The campaign effectively communicated milestones achieved at the ABCDF in eliminating the Aberdeen chemical weapons stockpile and risk it posed to the community. PRSA awarded the Army *Best in Show* after it received *Best in Maryland* (Institutional Programs category) for the "Safer Maryland Today" campaign and an *Award of Excellence* (Speeches category) for presentations given during a formal ceremony recognizing recent accomplishments.

