



# NEWS RELEASE



## Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 11, 2006  
Release #06-03

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### Workers begin demolishing Ton Container Cleanout building

**ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md.** — Today, five years following the tragic events of 9/11, workers at the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (ABCDF) achieved a major milestone in the facility's closure phase when they began demolishing the plant's Ton Container Cleanout (TCC) building where agent containers were once cleaned and decontaminated.

Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Army officials concluded that allowing the Aberdeen mustard agent stockpile to remain a potential terrorist target per the original destruction schedule, posed too great a risk to the community. The Army and Bechtel Aberdeen team conceived a plan to accelerate the stockpile's destruction by simplifying the original disposal process and reordering its sequence to destroy the mustard agent first. In March 2005, the Army finished destroying the drained mustard agent, one year ahead of its original schedule.

Today, ABCDF workers began demolishing the TCC building after a four-hour test in which the building's air-handling and air-filtering system was turned off and showed that the building's agent vapor levels are safe for workers.

"We are proud that our closure efforts are proceeding safely ahead of schedule," said ABCDF Site Project Manager (Acting) Brian O'Donnell. "The contractor, Bechtel, has done an outstanding job bringing us one step closer to becoming the first continental United States chemical demilitarization site to close its doors. Further, we are beating our original closure schedule and saving taxpayers money. That money can be used at other chemical weapons disposal facilities currently operating, helping those communities continue to reduce the risk posed by continued storage of their respective chemical weapons stockpiles."

Bechtel expects to finish demolishing the TCC in the next few months. Bechtel will then clean, test and demolish the Process Neutralization Building (PNB), where containers of mustard agent were drained and the agent neutralized. Decontamination efforts at the PNB are almost 70 percent complete. The Army expects to complete all closure field work at ABCDF by the summer of 2007.

The Army's overall chemical demilitarization program recently reached a milestone, too. On August 30, the Army announced the destruction of 50 percent of the munitions in its declared chemical stockpile.

The Army has been disposing of chemical munitions since 1990 when it began munitions destruction at Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System (JACADS), located 825 miles southwest of Honolulu, Hawaii. The JACADS disposal mission was completed in 2000, and the site remains a wildlife refuge. Other disposal missions began in Utah in 1996; Alabama in 2003; Oregon in 2004; and Indiana and Arkansas in 2005.

The Army is lowering the public risk associated with these aging munitions by safely eliminating the United States' entire stockpile of chemical weapons.

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Special Note: Demolition photos are available upon request.

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