



DEMIL DISPATCH

BGAD Project

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BGAD/BGCA Investigation Report Released by KDEP

In late October, the Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection's Division of Waste Management finished a year-long complaint investigation of the Blue Grass Army Depot (BGAD) and more specifically, the Blue Grass Chemical Activity (BGCA), a tenant facility on the depot in charge of the storage of Kentucky's chemical weapons stockpile. The anonymous complaints focused on topics such as

monitoring deficiencies, operating procedures, systematic operational failures and miscellaneous problems in the abilities of instruments and personnel to perform the sensitive task of monitoring the stockpile.

For a 2006 incident involving a cracked firing tube on a M55 rocket, the division issued two Notices of Violation (NOVs) to BGAD/BGCA for taking
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This photograph of BGAD's original one-ton container, holding a GB and miscellaneous decon solution mixture, was taken during the November 2004 plug change-out. During that task, workers found that the container was highly corroded, and, as a precaution, some of the contents were transferred to two new containers. In August, about a gallon of the original container's holdings leaked. BGAD officials are wanting to rid the stockpile of the three containers this upcoming spring.

Depot Planning to Rid One-Ton Containers in Early Spring

By: Shannon Powers

Blue Grass Army Depot (BGAD) officials are planning to rid Kentucky's chemical stockpile of three one-ton containers by May. The stainless steel containers, which hold a mixture of GB and miscellaneous decontamination liquids, are scheduled to be drained, neutralized, and removed during a project costing almost \$2 million.

A sealed glove box grouping, known as a chemical agent transfer system or CHATS, will be brought in to allow operators to manually drain the contents of each ton container into a self-contained neutralization unit held within a make-shift demilitarization facility located next to the containers' storage igloo. Kevin Flamm, project
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New BGCA Lab

Groundbreaking

Ground was broken on Dec. 18 for a new chemical monitoring laboratory at the Blue Grass Chemical Activity. Construction of the new facility is expected to cost around \$1 million and be completed in the summer.

The new laboratory will be nearly four times larger than the current one of only 640 square feet. The present laboratory tests air samples from storage igloos. The new facility will allow for the analysis of liquid samples. Additional personnel will be hired to perform these added duties.



Leasue Meyers has taken over the BGAD engineering duties.

Quarterly Briefs

—On Jan. 8, the CDCAB’s Solid Waste Working Group met to discuss Operation Swift Solution, the draining, neutralizing, and removal of the GB mixture and the three one-ton containers holding it. After discussions with ACWA and BGAD/BGCA, the group decided to accept the first phase of draining and neutralizing the mixture. They decided they could not accept the removal of the remaining hydrolysate from the depot until the chemical compounds were determined to see if there were safe ways of transport and if there were facilities that could handle its destruction.

—On Jan. 15, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) will host an informational meeting on Operation Swift Solution at the Carl D. Perkins Building at Eastern Kentucky University. The meeting is to start at 7 p.m.

in rooms A and B on the lobby level. The event will include a poster session, during which the public can discuss issues with ACWA and Blue Grass Chemical Activity personnel. There will be opportunities for public comment on the proposed method of ridding Richmond’s chemical stockpile of its three one-ton containers.

—Eric Ringo, a professional engineer and the BGAD Project Team Leader, accepted a position with the Finance and Administrative Cabinet in its Division of Mechanical Maintenance and Operations.

—Joe Wellner, a professional geologist in the Hazardous Waste Branch, has been assigned geology duties for BGAD. Wellner’s other Department of Defense sites include Fort Campbell, LBAD, and NOSL.

Leasue Meyers Takes Over BGAD Engineering Duties

The newest member of the BGAD Project Team in the Hazardous Waste Branch is Leasue Meyers. The environmental engineer assistant I has already been reviewing BGAD permits.

The Missouri native recently graduated from the University of Missouri with a B.S. in chemical engineering with an emphasis in environmental issues. While in college, she was actively involved in American Institute of Chemical

Engineers and Society of Women Engineers.

“My interest in the environment started when the EPA removed soil for lead sampling from my front yard in the early 1990s. Later, I learned about Superfund sites and other environmental issues in Southwest Missouri,” said Meyers.

Besides the environment, Meyers enjoys reading, traveling, the St. Louis Cardinals, and cooking.

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“inappropriate actions to characterize waste material in question” by using inadequate generator’s knowledge to assess the leakage and for storing the rockets in such a way which caused “compression of the pallet stack and subsequent cracking of the rocket in question.” Two other NOV’s were issued in the area of training—failure to properly train employees to prevent chemical releases and failure to provide an adequate refresher training program.

Several of the allegations were considered of a “potentially criminal nature” and have been forwarded to the Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet’s Office

of the Inspector General and the federal Environmental Protection Agency’s Criminal Investigation Division. These issues included: improper chemical monitoring, a “cover-up” involving employees’ exposure to harmful levels of chemical agent, signature inconsistencies in monitoring logs, “scrubbing” of documents, and the “black-balling” of a complainant for not signing off on a standard operating procedure thought to be incorrect.

For several months, the division and BGAD/BGCA have been in discussions on how to best remedy these issues.



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manager for Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives, said once the containers' liquid is neutralized into industrial waste, it will be stored at the depot until a contract can be obtained with a commercial facility to provide proper disposal. The actual containers will be decontaminated, cut in two, and recycled. Flamm calculates the whole process will take 80 days.

Problems with the original one-ton container have been

ongoing, including a plug change-out that went awry due to the corrosive contents eating away at its plugs and inner threads in November 2004. As a precaution, depot officials transferred some of the contents into two new stainless steel containers.

On Aug. 27, workers detected a leak in the igloo that houses all the one-ton containers. At first, it was reported as a minor leak, but two days later, it was determined that about a gallon of the GB mixture had

dripped from the original container into a spill pan below. The leak was the largest ever detected there.

While BGAD officials have said the leak posed no threat to the public or environment, they have stated that the one-ton containers are the biggest threat on the depot. "It's going to get worse with age. Acid in the one ton containers is going to continue to cause deterioration with the steel threads. Even the new ones are starting to show some

corrosion," said Flamm. during the Dec. 7 quarterly meeting of the Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board.

After several discussions on how best to handle the situation, BGAD and Kentucky Department of Environmental Protection officials have reached an understanding concerning the temporary authorization needed to the existing Research, Development, and Demonstration (RD&D) permit for this project.