



NEWS RELEASE



Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility

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APG is the first U.S. location to formally close its chemical weapons destruction facility

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. - U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) officials announced today that the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has approved the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility's (ABCDF) permit closure under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). This makes ABCDF, located here, the first of the nation's chemical weapons destruction facilities to receive regulatory agency closure certification.

"MDE has very strict standards for decontaminating a facility permitted as a hazardous waste operation prior to closure, and it requires very careful sampling and analysis documentation. The ABCDF work force met all of these requirements, which is consistent with their record of never receiving a Notice of Violation during ABCDF's operating life. I'm very proud of them," said Dale Ormond, CMA acting director.

Achieving RCRA closure involves a three-stage process that typically takes years to complete. A permitted facility must prepare and receive regulatory agency approval for its closure plan. The facility must then closely follow the plan as it decontaminates and disposes all of its contaminated equipment and any contaminated soil. The plan specifies a sampling analysis program for potentially contaminated materials at the site, and it establishes a set of reporting procedures. Finally, the facility submits a closure report to the agency confirming that all contaminated material has been properly removed or remediated, and verifying that all the procedures in the closure plan were followed.

"Everyone at ABCDF, government staff and Bechtel Aberdeen workers alike, along with APG's environmental compliance personnel, worked very closely with MDE officials throughout the life of the project to anticipate regulatory concerns and clarify reporting requirements. Closing ABCDF's RCRA permit in record time was an outgrowth of that history of cooperation," said Brian O'Donnell, ABCDF's site project manager.

ABCDF operated from April 2003 to February 2006, safely neutralizing 1,623 tons of mustard agent by mixing it with hot water and sodium hydroxide. The agent was drained from 1,817 one-ton steel containers. The ton containers were then decontaminated and recycled.

ABCDF is the second U.S. Army chemical demilitarization facility to complete chemical agent destruction operations. The Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System located 800 miles southwest of Hawaii completed operations in 2000, and is currently working with regulatory agency officials to close its RCRA permit.

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[Photo attachment 1: Former site of the ABCDF's Process Neutralization Building, one of two structures dedicated to agent destruction operations.](#)

[Photo attachment 2: Nature shot of Edgewood Area of the Aberdeen Proving Ground.](#)

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