

# PROGRESS UPDATE

## Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility

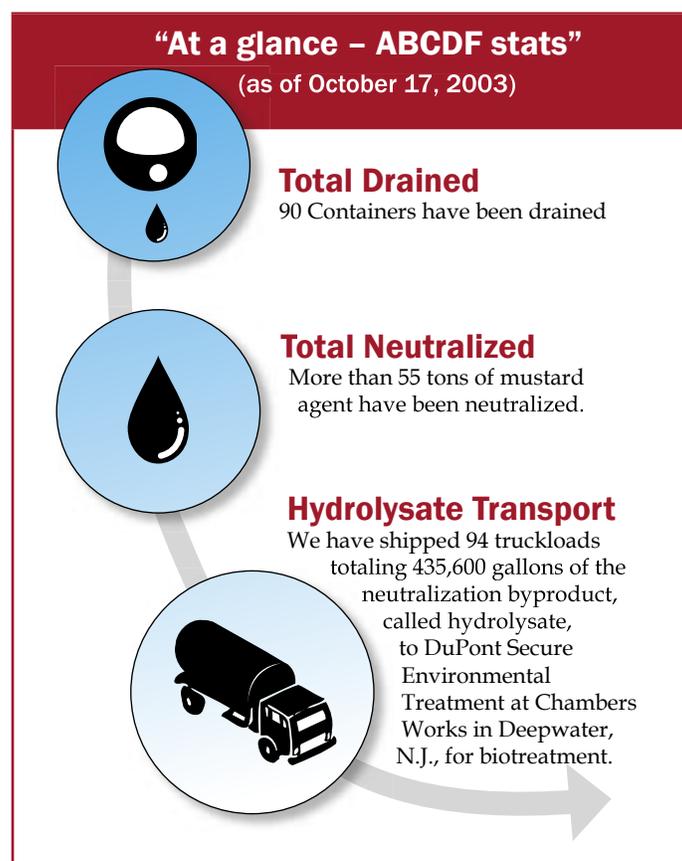
(as of October 17, 2003)

### Where We Are

- Since live agent operations began on April 23, 2003, workers at the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (ABCDF) have drained 90 containers of bulk mustard agent and neutralized more than 55 tons of agent. We have shipped 94 truckloads totaling 435,600 gallons of the neutralization byproduct, called hydrolysate, to the DuPont Secure Environmental Treatment facility in Deepwater, N.J., for biotreatment.

### What We've Done

- **STORAGE YARD, ABCDF WEATHER HURRICANE ISABEL** - Officials at the ABCDF closely followed the projected path of Hurricane Isabel days before she arrived last month and made repeated sweeps of the project site to remove, tie down or secure objects that might be damaged or cause damage during periods of high winds and rain. We worked closely with regulators at the Maryland Department of the Environment and obtained the approvals necessary to neutralize approximately 900 gallons of mustard agent stored in the facility's Holding Tank and move 12 filled mustard agent containers from the Process Neutralization Building, where they were awaiting disposal, back to the storage yard for more secure storage. After the storm moved out of the area, a damage assessment team determined that the facility and storage yard suffered no major damage from Isabel. Minor flooding of the roads surrounding the storage yard receded, leaving no evidence of any damage to the site.
- **NEUTRALIZATION PROCESSING EQUIPMENT MODIFIED** - Since the overheating of the carbon filter drum on Aug. 16, the neutralization facility has been in a maintenance stand-down. During that time, we made several modifications to the neutralization processing equipment to prevent a recurrence of the carbon filter drum problem and to improve the performance of the overall system. Those modifications are now almost complete.
- **DRAIN STATIONS MODIFIED** - Concurrently, we modified the drain station glove boxes by constructing monitoring chambers at each station in which the entire length of the drained ton container can be monitored for agent contamination while isolated from the drain station itself. Our testing revealed that part of the problem in clearing the containers was that the monitors were picking up residual contamination from the drain station, rather than the container. The modification of Drain Station #2 is complete and is undergoing testing. The modification of drain stations #1 and #3 is well underway.



## Where We're Going

- **LIMITED AGENT OPERATIONS EXPECTED TO BEGIN** - Assuming the successful completion of the Drain Station #2 tests in mid-October, we intend to initiate limited agent operations in Drain Station #2. We plan to issue a news release to let the community know when we have resumed limited operations. If all goes well with the operation of Drain Station #2, the other two drain stations will be gradually brought on line in early November.
- **TON CONTAINER CLEANOUT FACILITY ALMOST READY** - The Ton Container Cleanout facility, where the empty steel containers will be cleaned and decontaminated, is going through final start-up testing right now. We should be ready to initiate limited ton container cleanout operations by the end of the year. In this robotic facility, the empty containers will be cut in half and decontaminated to what is known as the "3X" level, which means it has been surface decontaminated to show no residual contamination as indicated by air monitoring. From there, the containers will be shipped to another Army installation for final decontamination to the "5X" level using a thermal treatment process. The containers then will be melted down and the steel recycled.
- **SCHEDULE FORECAST** - Our schedule forecast calls for completion of agent neutralization by Spring 2004 and completion of ton container cleanout operations by Winter 2004. While we remain well ahead of the original ABCDF schedule, we will not sacrifice safety for schedule.

## Where We'll Be

- Nov. 15-16, Home, Business & Family Expo at Ripken Stadium: Visit the outreach team's information booth at the Home, Business & Family Expo at Ripken Stadium on Nov. 15-16 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information, contact the Edgewood Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office, (410) 676-6800; the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility Public Affairs Office, (410) 436-5253; or the Bechtel Aberdeen Public Outreach Office, (410) 436-9507.