

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Army****Notice of Availability of the Record of Decision for Pilot Testing Neutralization/Biotreatment of Mustard Agent at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland**

AGENCY: Department of the Army, DoD.
ACTION: Record of Decision.

SUMMARY: This announces the availability of the Record of Decision (ROD) which documents and explains the Department of the Army's decision to construct and operate a facility to pilot test the neutralization/ biotreatment process of mustard agent using water at Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG), Maryland.

ADDRESSES: To obtain copies of the ROD, contact Ms. Nancy Hoffman, Edgewood Community Outreach Office, Woodbridge, Station, 1011 Woodbridge Center Way, Edgewood, Maryland 21040.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Catherine Herlinger at (800) 488-0648 or (410) 436-2583.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Army has determined that the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) adequately addresses the potential impacts of the Army's actions relating to the disposal of mustard agent stored at APG. The Army has also determined that the conclusions in the Final EIS establish that the decision to pilot test the neutralization/biotreatment process for mustard agent using water at the preferred site provides maximum protection to the environment, the general public, and workers at the pilot test facility. The Army plans to dispose of 615 tons of mustard agent stored at APG consistent with the terms of the ROD.

The alternatives considered in the Final EIS were no action (i.e., continued storage of mustard agent at APG) and locating the pilot facility at one of two potential sites within APG. Although the no action alternative is not viable under Public Law 99-145 (the Department of Defense Authorization Act of 1986), it was analyzed to provide a comparison with the proposed action. A comparison was made of the potential impacts of two different locations at APG for the facility. The locations were identified using criteria based on safety and compatibility with current APG activities. The selected site, located on the Bush River Peninsula, has the advantage of being adjacent to the Chemical Agent Storage Yard, where the mustard agent is stored in ton containers. Additionally, it was

determined to result in lower potential impacts to human health, land, water and ecological resources. Detonations of explosives and ordnance and testing munitions have previously contaminated the alternative site. Site clean up and remediation activities are not currently scheduled prior to construction. This would result in increased project duration and significantly impact the Chemical Stockpile Disposal Program mission's schedule date targeted for December 2004. Based on these impact analyses, it is concluded that conducting pilot test operations at the selected site is the preferred environmental alternative for implementing the neutralization/ biotreatment process using water.

Copies of the ROD may also be obtained by calling Ms. Hoffman, Edgewood Community Outreach Office, at (410) 676-6800.

Questions may be forwarded to Office of the Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization, ATTN: SFAE-CD-P (Ms. Herlinger), Building E4585, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland 21010-5401; or via e-mail at cherling@cdra.apgea.army.mil.

Dated: September 16, 1998.

Richard E. Newsome,

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Environment, Safety and Occupational Health) OASA (I, L&E).

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Army****Environmental Assessment (EA) on the Disposal and Reuse of the Defense Distribution Depot Memphis, Tennessee (DDMT)**

AGENCY: Department of the Army, DoD.

ACTION: Extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Army is announcing today the extension of the comment period for the Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) for the disposal and reuse of the Defense Distribution Depot Memphis, Tennessee (DDMT).

DATES: Submit comments on or before October 23, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Questions and comments should be directed to Mr. Jerry Jones, Corps of Engineers, Mobile District (ATTN: CESAM-PD-EI), 109 St. Joseph Street, P.O. Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama 36628-0001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mr. Jerry Jones at facsimile (334) 694-3815.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A Notice of Availability (NOA) and a summary of the proposed action was published in the **Federal Register** (63 FR 24165) on May 1, 1998. The notice described the Army's preferred alternative of encumbered disposal of DDMT to mitigate the adverse economic impact of closing the installation. The FNSI was signed on March 13, 1998. Following publication of the NOA, the Defense Depot Memphis Concerned Citizens Committee, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation requested an extension of the public comment period. The original comment period closed June 1, 1998.

The EA evaluates the environmental and socioeconomic effects associated with the disposal and subsequent reuse of the DDMT. The Army proposes to dispose of 642 acres divided into two sections, the main installation (574 acres) and Dunn Field (68 acres). This EA concludes that the disposal and subsequent reuse of the property will not have a significant impact on the human environment.

A copy of the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact has been placed at the Memphis/Shelby County Public Library, Main Branch, 1850 Peabody, Memphis, TN 38104; Memphis/Shelby County Health Department, Pollution Control Division, 814 Jefferson Avenue, Memphis, TN 38106; Memphis/Shelby County Public Library, Cherokee Branch, 3300 Sharpe Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111; The Memphis Depot Caretaker, 2163 Airways Boulevard, Building 14, Memphis, TN 38114.

Dated: September 17, 1998.

Richard E. Newsome,

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Environment, Safety and Occupational Health) OASA (I,L&E).

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**Basic Energy Sciences Advisory Committee**

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of open meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. No. 92-463, 86 Stat. 770), notice is given of a meeting of the Basic Energy Sciences Advisory Committee (BESAC).