



News Release

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ECBC Decontamination Technology Wins Prestigious Award

Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD — A decontamination technology developed by the U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (ECBC) was named a winner of the prestigious 2006 Award for Excellence in Technology Transfer.

The new technology, called "Enzyme-Based Decontamination Technology for Organophosphorus Nerve Agents and Pesticides," is an enzyme-based catalytic decontaminant for chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals. Designed for military use in combat and in operations other than war, ECBC's enzymatic decontamination system is unique because it is non-toxic and environmentally safe, a significant difference from caustic chemical decontamination solutions of the past. The system is dual-use, as it can be employed in military operations as well as in civilian first responder and homeland defense situations. In an incident where highly toxic chemicals are released, the enzymes quickly neutralize the chemicals before the contamination spreads.

The substance is stored as a dry powdered concentrate that is activated when combined with available water. It can then be applied to any water-tolerant surface with existing military or civilian spray or foam systems. No rinsing is required, which reduces both the time and amount of water needed to effectively decontaminate.

Because of improved logistics in storage and transporting the enzymes, fire fighters, HAZMAT personnel, and other first responders will be able to more quickly, safely, and effectively respond to an intentional or accidental release of chemical or biological contaminants that threaten public safety and homeland security.

ECBC patented this technology and licensed it to Genencor International, Inc., who licensed the technology and now manufactures the enzymatic decontamination technology under the trademark DEFENZ™.

"We are pleased that important technologies such as enzymatic decontamination are being recognized as important contributions to our nation's defense," said Mr. Jim Zarzycki, ECBC Technical Director.

The award is sponsored by the Federal Laboratory Consortium for Technology Transfer. The ECBC inventors will be honored at an award ceremony, which will take place on May 3rd in Minneapolis.

ECBC is the Army's principal research and development center for chemical and biological defense technology, engineering and services. ECBC has achieved major technological advances for national defense, civilian needs and industrial competitiveness, with a long and distinguished history of providing the Armed Forces with quality systems and outstanding customer service. ECBC is a US Army Research and Development Command laboratory located at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. For more information about the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center, please visit our Web site at <http://www.ecbc.army.mil> or call (410) 436-3610.

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