

As It Appears To Us . . .

Readers are invited to contribute to this column, but each letter must be limited to 250 words. No contribution will be published unless it is signed along with writer's phone number and correct mailing address. All signatures will be published. Opinions are not necessarily those of the *Clintonian*.

NOTE: Letters to the Editor are printed as submitted - with no editing.

Editor: Daily Clintonian,
REPLY TO ATTENTION OF
Public Affairs Office

Bureau Chief
Associated Press
2021 K. Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20006-1082

Dear Sir or Madam:

The news article written by Donna De La Cruz of the Washington Bureau of the Associated Press, entitled "Wary Residents Awaiting Word on Nerve Agent," appeared in various media outlets. This article contained inaccuracies, which need clarification on the Army's plan for treatment of the caustic wastewater resulting from the destruction of the liquid chemical agent stockpile stored at the Newport Chemical Depot, Newport, Ind. Once the nerve agent is destroyed at Newport, using a proven chemical neutralization process, the caustic by-product is to be safely transported to a permitted commercial treatment facility for treatment using a proven biotreatment process. The caustic wastewater is not VX and has none of the characteristics of VX. The effluent from this biotreatment process would be released from the commercial facility in accordance with state and federal environmental laws and regulations and in compliance with all operating permits.

Several studies have been conducted that confirm the shipment of the caustic wastewater to a properly permitted commercial treatment, storage, disposal and treatment facility for treatment/disposal can be performed safely and without adverse impact to the public and the environment. The wastewater from Newport is similar to waste routinely transported to and treated at

permitted commercial disposal facilities across this nation.

This plan is consistent with recommendations made by the National Academy of Sciences to use existing commercial facilities that have the expertise and proven technologies to treat such material rather than to duplicate this capability on-site at Newport.

The article also described nerve agent as "so lethal that a small amount could kill millions." This is an inaccurate statement that stretches one's perception of lethality of VX. While we agree that VX is a lethal material, the fact is that an amount the size of a pin drop is lethal to an individual once it has entered the blood stream, if left untreated.

For the facts, visit <http://www.set.dupont.com> or <http://www.cma.army.mil> or call 1-800-488-0648.

A copy of this letter will be provided to news organizations which publish this story.

Destroying the nerve agent in Newport, Ind. is a part of our national imperative to destroy our Nation's aging and obsolete chemical weapons stockpile effectively eliminating a potential and significant terrorist target for our nation. Under a 1985 Congressional mandate and the international Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty, ratified by the U.S. Senate in 1997, the Army has been tasked with safely destroying its aging and obsolete chemical weapons stockpile to include the VX nerve agent in Newport, Indiana. This is an important project to help ensure our nation's security for today and in the future.

Respectfully,
Jeffrey D. Lindblad
Public Affairs Officer
U.S. Army Chemical
Materials Agency