

Bio Terror Bible

EXPOSING THE COMING BIO-TERROR PANDEMIC

BIOTERRORBIBLE.COM: Totally inexcusable lab "[accidents](#)" have been occurring at BSL Labs (biosafety level labs) within the United States and around the world. Should a bio-terror pandemic arise, it is possible that a lab "accident" may serve as the scapegoat and source of the deadly pathogen.

Title: Virus Box Explodes At Ohio FedEx Site

Date: March 20, 2003

Source: [New York Times](#)

Abstract: A package containing the West Nile virus exploded on Tuesday night at a Federal Express building here. Fifty workers were evacuated.

Fire officials said dry ice used to preserve tissue samples with live virus might have caused the shoebox-size package to burst at the FedEx office near Port Columbus International Airport.

The package, from the Ohio Department of Health and being sent to a researcher at the University of Texas, held brain and kidney tissue from a bird that had tested positive for the virus, said Jay Carey, spokesman for the health department.

The virus was live but the samples were frozen and unlikely to become airborne, Mr. Carey said.

"The risk to employees or first responders is still very low," he said. "Only people with open wounds who would come in direct contact with the sample material would be at any risk of infection."

Workers were allowed back into the building after four hours.

"I think everyone's anxiety level is kind of high," Sgt. Brent Mull of the police said ([New York Times, 2003](#)).

Title: Ft. Detrick Unearths Hazardous Surprises

Date: May 27, 2003

Source: [UCLA](#)

Abstract: Two years of digging at the U.S. Army's Fort Detrick in Frederick has unearthed more than 2,000 tons of hazardous waste -- including vials of live bacteria and nonvirulent anthrax that the military did not know was buried there, Detrick officials said.

Discovery of the pathogens at the former biological weapons research center turned what the Army thought would be industrial waste removal into the biggest cleanup in its history. So far, cleanup crews have discovered more than 100 glass vials, many containing live bacteria, and in a few, a nonvirulent strain of anthrax. The \$25 million excavation is due to end this year.

While the Army searches for evidence of biological and chemical weapons in Iraq, Fort Detrick's cleanup saga shows how, nearly 40 years after the United States ended such programs at home, it still struggles with their lingering dangers. As in the Middle East, poor documentation, the passage of time and the programs' secrecy have slowed the effort.

"You find it, contain it and try to figure out what it is," said Col. John Ball, Fort Detrick garrison commander. "We're learning, but it's expensive."

In the tall grass off Kemp Lane in Frederick, deer leap, white tails flashing, and cows graze nearby. When the animals die, they are autopsied as a precaution. This is Area B, a 400-acre site that hosted Fort Detrick's target range, cropland and, in its southwest corner, a network of waste pits. Inside a specially pressurized and filtered vinyl tent, workers in biohazard suits empty the dump of its Cold War trash and secrets.

"There's a certain time capsule effect," Ball said.

Inside the tent, bulldozers operate under blast shields, as pit contents periodically ignite. The crew breathes through air hoses. The site is quarantined for two hours at the end of each working day, while the tent's air is tested for pathogens.

When digging began in April 2001, the Army expected to find mostly lab chemicals, debris and incinerator ash. But little more than one foot down, the bulldozers hit upon corroded drums of herbicides and unidentified chemicals, syringes, lab instruments and strange substances mixed with the dirt. They plucked out 50 pressurized cylinders of gases and liquids that still await analysis. Four dissected laboratory rats appeared, still floating in jars of formaldehyde at least 30 years old.

But what the Army least expected to find were tiny vials of live bacteria like *Brucella melitensis*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and *Bacillus anthracis* -- a nonvirulent form of the anthrax bacterium, the potent form of which was brewed by the gallon at Fort Detrick until 1969.

"The documentation for where this came from doesn't exist," said Lt. Col. Donald Archibald, Fort Detrick's director of safety, environment and integrated planning. After larger objects are removed, the soil and waste are pulverized, and throughout the process, they are doused with bleach to kill all bacteria. After testing for pathogens, it is sent in sealed containers to a disposal facility in Texas.

The few documents that exist say Fort Detrick used the dump from 1955 through the 1960s, while the post served on the front lines of the U.S. biological and chemical warfare program. During those years, technicians brewed a pastelike anthrax "slurry." Scientists sprayed germs into a giant sphere called "the Eightball," testing them on livestock and, occasionally, people. The Crops Division tested a key ingredient in the dangerous Vietnam War-era defoliant known as Agent Orange: Traces of it have shown up in the dump.

Hubert Kaempf, 83, supervised Detrick's waste haulers during those years. "We had one of the finest safety departments in the world," he said. "But what was in keeping with safety and sanitary laws then would now be very much forbidden."

Some waste -- laboratory materials, animal carcasses -- was supposed to be sanitized, incinerated or both, and the ashes buried. Chemicals were dumped directly into the pits. From time to time, other government institutions sent trash to Detrick's landfill. They included, Kaempf said, the Central Intelligence Agency, which, a declassified government report shows, tested biological agents at Fort Detrick.

The pits had no linings, as Fort Detrick's landfill does now. There was no inventory done. Such precautions weren't required.

Then, in 1969, President Richard M. Nixon halted the weapons programs. Fort Detrick underwent a massive decontamination and became a conventional medical research center. Today, it houses the National Cancer Institute and the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases.

"When Nixon shut us down," Kaempf said, "There was a lot of lab apparatus that was just dumped. Whatever records . . . I have no way of knowing where they went."

In 1991, toxins turned up in Army monitoring wells near the dump. Tests showed trichloroethylene, or TCE, a metal-cleaning solvent linked to liver and kidney damage, and tetrachloroethylene, or PCE, a degreasing compound believed to cause liver cancer.

The Maryland Department of the Environment and the Frederick County Health Department tested 33 wells at homes near Area B. Half were contaminated with the two agents, six so badly that the water was unfit to drink. In a few wells, concentrations of the two chemicals exceeded Environmental Protection Agency limits many times over. In an Army monitoring well nearest the dump, the chemicals were so concentrated, "you could smell it," said Joseph Gortva, an engineer who is managing the cleanup.

The post paid to put homes with tainted wells on the city water system. It briefed politicians and posted detailed information on its Web site. It convened an advisory board of neighbors, former workers and businesspeople for public meetings every two months.

"They've been very open and honest," said Michael Kurtianyck, a real estate agent on the advisory board. "I was looking for something really secretive, but no."

Others aren't so sure. Said Helen Alexander, another member from Frederick: "We probably don't know all the ins and outs of what they actually found."

At one meeting in November 2000, the advisory board asked a representative from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene whether the department could study cancer rates in the population living downhill from the dump from the 1960s through the 1980s. He replied, according to the minutes, "that it would be difficult because data from the Maryland Cancer Registry only goes back to 1992."

To secure Pentagon money for a cleanup, Detrick needed to estimate the size and scope of the project. Archivists located an old map of Area B, noting a series of four waste pits in a corner known as B-11. A soil test boring released a gas that sent several workers to the hospital for observation.

By the late 1990s, the restoration team had compiled thick binders with everything it knew.

"We couldn't rule out that we might find biological material, though we didn't expect to," Archibald said. The Pentagon authorized a \$5 million project. Digging began on the largest of the four main waste pits.

Frederick Mayor Jennifer Dougherty, who had previously taken Fort Detrick to task about sharing information on the cleanup, remembered a phone call from Ball a year ago, the day the anthrax turned up. "He said, 'We found a vial . . .'" she recalled. "At that point, your mind just races."

Ball remembered thinking, "This could be bad, but let's wait for the testing." It showed that the vial contained "a vaccine strain of anthrax," which could not cause the disease. The Fort Detrick team found identifying biological materials a costly, uncertain process.

In a Restoration Advisory Board meeting Oct. 9, Ball "expressed his surprise at learning that the United States, being one of the most advanced technological nations in the world . . . does not have the ability to rapidly and accurately identify biological culture samples," meeting minutes noted.

Whether in Iraq or Frederick, "there's a body of science we rely on, but there's a lot of gray area," said Archibald, the safety director. "The more money you put into testing, the better the results."

As retrieving, identifying and destroying biological agents tripled the cleanup budget, the Pentagon balked, pressing to delay the digging. Ball and Maryland officials pushed for the funds needed to finish. Digging in the final three pits started this month and is expected to end by December.

"I think today's Fort Detrick is a good neighbor," Dougherty said.

Though a spokesman for the EPA said the groundwater contamination has reached acceptable levels, the Army estimates it will take four more years, and more money, to clean it completely.

Meanwhile, Fort Detrick is searching for other uncharted dumps.

"You never know what's there until you start digging," Ball said. "We've generally ruled out finding a nuclear weapon" ([UCLA, 2003](#)).

Title: Fort Detrick Cleans Up

Date: June 2, 2003

Source: [Chemical & Engineering News](#)

Abstract: The Army has unearthed remnants of a former weapons program, not in Iraq but at Fort Detrick in Frederick, Md. On a remote part of the installation, which once produced chemical and biological weapons, the Army has dug up 113 bacteria-containing vials but no chemical or biological warfare agents. Most of the vials contain live bacteria, including nonvirulent strains of anthrax.

About 12 years ago, monitoring wells in remote Area B-11 of Fort Detrick detected high levels of trichloroethylene (TCE) and tetrachloroethylene (PCE) in groundwater. TCE, a cleaning solvent, and PCE, a degreasing agent, were detected at levels hundreds of times above EPA's maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 5 ppb.

When the Army tested 33 nearby residential wells, it found seven with unacceptably high levels of these potential carcinogens. At the Army's expense, these seven homes were connected to other water supplies.

The Army does not have an inventory of what was dumped in Area B-11's four unlined pits. But the Army suspects that TCE and PCE leaked from corroded drums dumped into the pits and then leached into groundwater.

Actual excavation of the 400-acre site to remove toxic chemicals and medical and lab waste buried from 1955 to 1970 began two years ago. "This is the only excavation of this magnitude at Fort Detrick," Army spokesman Chuck Dasey says. It is expected to cost more than \$25 million.

Under a pressurized, air-filtered tent the size of a football field, workers in protective suits have removed 2,005 tons of hazardous waste and contaminated soil from Pit 1, the largest pit. In addition to vials of live *Brucella melitensis*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, and *Bacillus anthracis*, workers have also removed more than 40 drums, some containing herbicides, and 50 gas- and liquid-containing cylinders.

Traces of dioxins found in agent orange, a defoliant used in the Vietnam War, have been detected in Pit 1, but no vials of viruses have been found, even though Fort Detrick actively made viral as well as

bacterial biological weapons until 1969.

Tainted soil and waste from Pit 1 has been processed and, if pathogen-free, sealed in containers and shipped to a hazardous waste disposal site in Texas.

[EPA Region III](#) spokesman David Sternberg says, "Current monitoring indicates that no contamination above the MCL for TCE and PCE is reaching beyond the property line, but significant contamination remains inside the base at Area B."

Cleanup of the other three much smaller pits began in early May. Once restored, by early next year, Area B-11 will be used for military training ([Chemical & Engineering News, 2003](#)).

Title: SARS Alert Likely To Be Eased In New Year: Official

Date: December 21, 2003

Source: [China Post](#)

Abstract: The heightened SARS alert could be eased Jan. 1 as most of the 34 people coming into close contact with this winter's first patient with the disease have completed quarantine without developing any symptoms, a health official said yesterday.

If no new cases are reported in the next few days until Dec. 31, the level B alert will be lowered to level Zero on New Year Day, said Center for Disease Control Deputy Director Shih Wen-yi.

The fever-screening measure going with the level B alert requiring temperatures to be taken in public places will then be no longer necessary, except at airports, Shih added.

Twelve people having had close contact with the patient, a military lab researcher surnamed Chan who studied the SARS virus, completed a 10-day health watch at midnight Friday without showing any signs of contacting the disease.

Another 20 were expected to finish their health watch — which required them to monitor their own temperatures — at midnight yesterday, Shih said.

The remaining two, the wife and father of the patient, will remain home for quarantine until Christmas, he said. The wife and father took care of Chan until he was taken to the hospital Dec. 15.

The island was put on a level B alert — the second-highest of a four-level system — Dec. 17 after the military researcher was confirmed ill with SARS.

An official report released Thursday following a probe determined that it is an isolated case, as Chan was infected in a maximum-security laboratory with a biosafety level of four and the chance of the virus getting out of the lab is virtually nil.

Thirty-four people who had come into close contact with the patient, including members of his family and passengers who sat near him on airplanes to and from Singapore, were told to quarantine themselves at home for 10 days.

Chan traveled to Singapore after being exposed to the virus, health officials said.

The patient was reported to be recovering at the Taipei Municipal Heping Hospital, which is equipped to treat SARS patients.

His doctor said the patient remained in stable condition and was taken off a respirator yesterday.

President Chen Shui-bian, wishing Chan a quick recovery, said the SARS case has demonstrated the importance for Taiwan to join the World Health Organization (WHO).

Speaking at a ceremony to honor senior medical workers, Chen said the reappearance of SARS in Taiwan has showed how the island's absence from the WHO has crippled the U.N. health body's efforts to fight epidemics.

Although Taiwan succeeded in overcoming the disease earlier this year on its own, Chen maintained that the fight against diseases knows no political boundaries, but that Taiwan has been shut out for political reasons.

He vowed to continue the country's seven-year effort to join the WHO as an observer, saying that persistence will eventually lead to success.

Taiwan's previous bids to join the WHO have been blocked by China, which claims sovereignty over the nation and goes out of its way to isolate Taiwan at every opportunity.

About 200 senior medical workers were honored in yesterday's ceremony and the president awarded medals to several who boasted careers of more than 60 years ([China Post, 2003](#)).