



SAMPLE RECEIPT FACILITY | SRF

The Sample Receipt Facility (SRF) is the only full-range national resource to receive, triage, sample and screen "unknowns" coming from anywhere in the world, including military theaters of operation, intelligence organizations and law enforcement agencies.



The U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (ECBC) is the only organization in the country where analysis of these "unknowns" can take place. For decades, the Center has played a critical role for the international community in receiving and analyzing samples where the contents are not known. Currently this work is being conducted in several different buildings across the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG). The SRF will upgrade and expand ECBC's existing capability while consolidating several functions under one roof.

The Center's chemical and biological defense experts will take receipt of the sample. Scientists will then conduct a risk assessment to determine where and how it should be handled and conduct all documentary processes as required by law. This triage process can include characterizing samples, determining contents of unknown samples, removing of explosive configurations, and documenting a legal chain of evidence for the sample.

The SRF is the first multi-agency funded project at APG — with the Army, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) — all contributing to the construction funds. The facility will promote synergy between/among these agency's missions. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers worked with experts and scientists from the various agencies to design this one of a kind facility.

The FBI will safely receive weapons of mass destruction (WMD) evidence by using specialized chemical and biological forensic laboratories designed to protect them as they conduct their traditional forensic examinations on contaminated evidence. Simultaneously, ECBC will identify and render safe the hazardous materials or explosives. The new DHS Chemical Security Analysis Center (CSAC) would then integrate the combined laboratory results with information from intelligence reports and other knowledge databases to further aid in characterizing the material or provide investigative leads.

The 40,000 square foot facility contains many specialized areas in order to complete the mission. An explosive chamber is available for the receipt and triage of explosively configured samples. Two Biological Safety Level 3 Labs are available to work with biological samples at the BSL 3 level. An evidence intake and processing bay with triage laboratory will be the starting point for all non-explosive samples, and after initial triage there are forensic examination and containment labs for further analysis if needed.

The SRF is located next to ECBC's Advanced Chemistry Laboratory. Utilities were installed and the foundation poured in 2007. The administrative and lab spaces are expected to be completed in 2010. Until all third party inspections and certifications of the SRF are complete, ECBC's Chemical Transfer Facility (CTF) will continue to receive, triage, sample and screen "unknowns." Operations are expected to transfer from the CTF in early 2011. The explosive chamber is also expected to be completed in 2011, at which time the facility's capability to handle explosively configured samples will be realized. The total cost of the facility is \$24M.

For more information, contact the
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