

RCC1.960618.067f

July 30, 1992

DUGWAY PROVING GROUND, Utah -- Dugway Proving Ground will begin a test of the Concept Model of the Bio-Chemical Detector in September 1992 at the Baker Test Facility.

A critical need exists in the Army for a biological agent detection capability for use by our soldiers in the field. The Bio-Chemical Detector will continuously sample the air and identify any dangerous biological pathogens and toxins. This would alert our soldiers in the field to put on their protective clothing, and to determine when the threat has passed. The testing is necessary to ensure the device can selectively differentiate between potential threat organisms and naturally occurring organisms.

The challenge materials for this test are:

- Bacillus subtilis var. niger, a bacterial simulant;
- MS2 bacteriophage, a viral simulant;
- T-2 toxin, a toxin produced by fungi;
- Staphylococcal enterotoxin B, a toxin that causes food poisoning;
- botulinum toxin A, a toxin that causes food poisoning;
- Yersinia pestis, a vaccine strain of the organism that causes plague;
- Coxiella burnetii, the organism that causes Q-fever.

The testing will involve both liquid and aerosol challenges inside the Biosafety Level 3 containment facility using appropriate safety practices, and outdoor field trials using simulant only. The public will not be in danger.

At the conclusion of testing, all test equipment will be thoroughly decontaminated using established practices.

Dugway officials have coordinated this project and the installation's emergency response plan with the Utah Department of Health, the Department of Public Safety and the Tooele County Emergency Management Director. All emergency response personnel have been fully trained.

This test will be conducted in full compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act. All biological protection testing at Dugway has been addressed in the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the Department of Defense Biological Defense Research Program. Additionally, Dugway has prepared a Record of Environmental Consideration and submitted it to the State, along with the notification letter to the State Air Quality Board.

In November 1969, the United States officially renounced the use of biological warfare, confining programs to defensive testing only. Since that time, Dugway's biological program is limited solely to testing military equipment such as protective masks, clothing, decontamination systems and detection devices against threat agents.