

Researchers to Develop Next Generation Chemical and Biological Agent Protective Clothing

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An international team announced today that they have come together to develop critically needed protective garments for first responders to natural disasters and bio-terror attacks. The garments will provide military and emergency personnel protective wear that is lighter, longer wearing, and offers increased protection from contaminants and a broad range of toxic chemicals.

“This alliance will help meet the needs of the post 9/11 global environment,” said Dr. Ron Kendall, director of The Institute of Environmental and Human Health at Texas Tech University. “The United States and Great Britain are placing a great deal of emphasis on preparedness and responsiveness to emergencies. The product we are developing will go a long way to ensuring the safety of those who respond after disasters.”

The partnership includes TIEHH, the British company Remploy Frontline, known globally as the premiere manufacturer of CBRN (Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear) protective clothing, and U.S.-based Hobbs Bonded Fibers. The three signed an agreement Friday to work together to develop and produce the new protective wear.

“With this new alliance, we hope to take fabric technology for protective clothing to the next level, much like going from VHS to DVD,” Kendall said.

The new garments will be developed with a novel protective fabric technology using cotton and synthetic fibers. The technology was created earlier this year by TIEHH researcher Dr. Seshadri Ramkumar and is in keeping with the modernization strategy of the chemical and biological defense program of the U.S. Department of Defense.

“The consortium hopes to take fabric technology for protective clothing to the next level, and we are very excited to be a part of this alliance,” said Paul Dunderdale, senior vice president of Remploy Frontline.

“Remploy is constantly working on next generation technology and this new partnership will enable all of us to move forward.”

Remploy Frontline has for more than 30 years manufactured state-of-the-art protective clothing for military and emergency personnel throughout the world. Hobbs Bonded Fibers for the past 50 years has specialized in developing and manufacturing specialty nonwoven products for industrial and consumer markets.

“This project will provide a much needed boost to Texas manufacturing and agricultural industries,” said Carey Hobbs, president of Hobbs Bonded Fibers. “This technology provides a new niche market for cotton and other fibers.”

Source: Texas Tech University

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