GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) Chemical Security Analysis Center (CSAC) provides a robust and reliable science-based technical assistance capability that puts actionable technical information in the hands of the operational community and decision-makers in a timely and comprehensive manner. Operating on a 24-hours a day, seven-days a week basis, S&T CSAC Technical Assistance responds to questions and information requests from the DHS Components, other agencies within the federal government, as well as state and local authorities. S&T CSAC Technical Assistance plays an integral role in the emergency response protocol of the DHS National Operations Center.

Damaged volumetric tanks and equipment at the Adair Grain Inc. Fertilizer Plant in West, Texas.
(*Photo courtesy of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);* EPA website)

S&T CSAC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In addition to traditional warfare agents and emerging chemical threats, S&T CSAC Technical Assistance also extends to the accidental or intentional release of toxic industrial chemicals. Participating in the responses to major accidental chemical releases, S&T CSAC is instrumental in providing critical, time-sensitive information and analysis for events such as the 2013 ammonium nitrate explosion in West, Texas, (see figure above) and the 2014 methylcyclohexyl methanol spill in West Virginia.

Over the past thirteen years, S&T CSAC Technical Assistance has responded to more than 750 requests for information from operators, emergency planners, and policy-makers, averaging more than 65 such requests per year. S&T CSAC serves as a critical resource for DHS components in the area of actionable information related to hazardous chemicals.

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