

# Geocell & Eastman Demonstrate Rapid Deployment Flood Wall in Kingsport, Tennessee



## Eastman targets floods with 'wall'

Fighting floods just got a lot easier. Eastman Chemical Co. has partnered with Geocell Systems Inc. and Spartech Corp. to develop the Rapid Deployment Flood Wall (RDFW), a new technology designed to replace sandbagging. **Page 1B.**



August 28, 2002

## Eastman unveils new technology to replace sandbags in fighting floods



Al Arellanes, president of Geocell Systems, explains the new Rapid Deployment Flood Wall that his company and Spartech Corp. have developed in partnership with Eastman Chemical Co.

■ **Rapid Deployment** Flood Wall can be erected and filled with sand in one-twentieth of the time using one-fifth of the labor it takes to erect a comparable sandbag wall.

By SHARON CASKEY HAYES  
shayes@timesnews.net

KINGSPO RT — Fighting floods just got a whole lot easier.

Eastman Chemical Co. has partnered with Geocell Systems Inc. and Spartech Corp. to develop the Rapid Deployment Flood Wall (RDFW), a new technology designed to replace sandbagging.

Eastman hosted a demonstration of the new technology Tuesday for community leaders from throughout the area.

"This is a technology that could help save lives, property and communities," said Phil Griswold, vice president and general manager of Eastman's Specialty Plastics Business.

The RDFW is made of specialty copolyester plastic produced in pellet form by Eastman and extruded into sheets by Spartech Corp. The design for the product was developed by Al Arellanes, president of Geocell Systems.

Arellanes said the RDFW is time saving, easy

Please see EASTMAN, page 2B

## Eastman unveils new technology to fight flooding

Continued from page 1B

to use and cost effective compared with sandbagging. The RDFW can be erected and filled with sand in one-twentieth of the time using one-fifth of the labor it takes to fill a comparable sandbag wall. Six workers and one loader operator can build an RDFW fortification wall 100 feet long, 4 feet wide and 4 feet high in one hour. An equivalent sandbag wall would take 35 workers more than 19 hours to construct.

And the RDFW is reusable at least six times, making it much more cost efficient than sandbags, Arellanes said.

"Until now, there has been no other choice but to use sandbags for flooding emergencies and rapid force protection needs," Arellanes said.

"We now have a much more efficient means for expedient flood fighting and force protection needs that could save millions of dollars, countless hours and untold heartache in the future," he said. "What

flood fighters have is a new tool that they can put in their flood-fighting arsenal."

Griswold said the new technology has congressional backing led by U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson, R-Mo., who serves as a member of the House Energy and Water Development Subcommittee.

He said Emerson is urging the Army Corps of Engineers to store RDFWs in "strategic locations" throughout the country to help protect lives and property against flooding.

Eastman Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Brian Ferguson said the technology can also be adapted for use in plant security, transportation routing, and as fortification for military purposes.

He said the U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Committee is proposing \$1.5 million in Department of Defense funding for additional testing of the RDFW technology.

"Flooding is a universal problem. Each year in the United States, floods claim

dozens of lives. They often leave thousands homeless and cause millions of dollars in property damage," Ferguson said.

He said the world has turned to sandbagging as its defense against flooding for more than 100 years.

"This method is very dated, it's costly, it's labor intensive, it's unreliable, time consuming, and it puts people at risk," Ferguson said. "We're proud to have our product used in something that can prevent the needless loss of life and the needless loss of property."

U.S. Rep. Bill Jenkins, R-Rogersville, commended all the companies involved with the project.

"It's my hope that you're going to provide a favor to the entire country and in fact to the entire world by advancing this concept," Jenkins said. "Hopefully, in the process all of you involved will make some money. And hopefully, this will be big enough that it will increase the flow of this product and create some more great jobs."



**Geocell Systems Inc.**

Pier 54, Terry Francois Blvd.

Suite 202

San Francisco, CA 94107

(415) 541-5300

info@geocellsystems.com

GSA # GS-07F-0340M