

Update from NPHL's Chemical Terrorism Preparedness Laboratory

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has continued to emphasize the importance of developing capability for meeting the many challenges of chemical terrorism. Through the chemical terrorism preparedness program, with the Nebraska Health and Human Services System at the State of Nebraska, the NPHL initiated testing protocols for chemicals of primary concern.

The Chemical Terrorism Preparedness Laboratory (CTPL) at the NPHL recently completed validations for heavy metals in urine and for cyanide metabolites in whole blood.

Validations for these tests were certified by the CDC following a testing challenge process. The CTPL was certified as a Level-2 facility for testing two sets of analytes. For this program, blood cyanide will be measured by gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS), whereas urine metals will be measured by inductively-coupled plasma mass spectrometry (ICP-MS). The next focus of effort will be on meeting the requirements for testing of nerve agent metabolites in urine.

Questions about the CTPL can be directed to Dr. Doug Stickle at 402-559-8785 or dstickle@unmc.edu. Dana El-Hajjar may also be contacted if you have questions (402-559-9421 or delhajja@unmc.edu).