



U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL
MATERIALS AGENCY

PRESS RELEASE

Umatilla Chemical Depot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 18, 2004
Time: 9:30 a.m.

For More Information Contact:
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Umatilla Successfully Destroys Liquid Chemical Agent

Umatilla Chemical Depot, Hermiston, Ore. – The Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) began using one of its two Liquid Incinerators (LIC1) to destroy GB agent yesterday. Early Sunday afternoon the incinerator started the process of destroying nearly 560 gallons of chemical agent. The process took about 11 hours. The procedure marks the first time the LIC1 has been used to burn agent at the facility.

Although the LIC1 has been operational since the start of agent operations in September, before today it has destroyed decontamination solution used in various cleaning processes.

To begin burning chemical agent, plant operators had to achieve a minimum of 500 gallons of agent stored in one of two holding tanks. Each rocket contains about one gallon of GB agent, so more than 500 rockets needed to be processed. As the LIC1 began incinerating agent Sunday, 660 rockets had been drained and their components destroyed.

"The beginning of agent feed to the Liquid Incinerator is a major milestone," said Doug Hamrick, UMCDF Project General Manager. "It represents the final destruction step of the agent from the rockets previously destroyed in the Deactivation Furnace and the complete elimination of the risk associated with those individual munitions. There is nothing left to harm the public or impact the environment."

Yesterday's activity is part of the UMCDF's 90-day start-up plan, which focuses on a slow, deliberate process of operating in a safe and environmentally compliant manner and not on a production schedule.

The UMCDF is located on the Umatilla Chemical Depot near Hermiston, Ore. The depot stores approximately 12 percent of the nation's original stockpile of chemical weapons. Destruction of the stockpile began on Sept. 7, 2004.

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MEDIA ADVISORY

Both Mary Binder, Umatilla public affairs officer, and Rick Kelley, Washington Group International public affairs officer, are out of the area Monday - Thursday, but available on cell phone: 541-379-8810 and 541-571-1779, respectively. Please feel free to call them if you need additional assistance.

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The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency is responsible for safely storing and eliminating the United States' aging chemical weapons and agent stockpiles and for the safe elimination of recovered chemical materiel.

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