



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

Umatilla Chemical Depot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Depot Monitor Detects GB Agent Vapor

UMATILLA CHEMICAL DEPOT, Hermiston, Ore. – A depot chemical operations crew detected GB (sarin) chemical agent vapor today while sampling the inside of an M55 rocket shipping and firing tube.

The crew detected the vapor while conducting routine monitoring operations with standard mobile air-monitoring equipment. Depot crews placed the M55 rocket into an “over pack” container to prevent chemical agent vapor from escaping to the outside atmosphere.

At no time was there a danger to the public or the environment.

Depot storage structures have a “passive” filter system, which prevents chemical agent vapor from escaping to the outside atmosphere. However, as a further protective measure, a powered filter system was installed based on this event.

To further ensure their continued safe storage, over packed weapons are placed in an igloo with similar over packed items and monitored daily.

As is standard procedure, depot officials notify the public when such incidents occur. Also, emergency operations centers in Umatilla and Morrow counties, Ore., Benton County, Wash., the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality have been notified.

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