



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

Umatilla Chemical Depot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Umatilla Safely Moves First Rockets to Disposal Facility

UMATILLA CHEMICAL DEPOT, HERMISTON, ORE. – Umatilla Chemical Depot chemical weapons handlers moved one pallet with 15 GB-filled (sarin) M55 rockets from a storage igloo to the disposal facility between noon and 1 p.m. today. The workers used a specially designed steel container on a flat bed truck to move the pallet.

“I was extremely pleased with the operation,” said Depot Commander Lt. Col. Doc Holliday, who observed the entire movement. “The workers showed confidence and professionalism. The methodical, detailed approach to their work looked routine.”

Workers involved in moving the pallet had similar comments.

“This is what we’ve trained to do” ... “It went just like clock work” ... “Smooth sailing” ... and, “I’ve been waiting for this for a long time” were some of the comments workers made.

Afterward, depot and disposal facility officials evaluated the process and said they are ready for the next step – actual disposal operations.

Current plans are to punch, drain and shear one rocket from the pallet of 15 sometime Wednesday morning. The sheared rocket pieces will be thermally decontaminated in the facility’s deactivation furnace system. The drained chemical agent will be stored in a facility holding tank. In about a month, officials estimate they will have enough drained agent to destroy in one of the facility’s two liquid incinerators.

The depot will provide the public with regular updates on disposal operations. A toll-free number, 1-888-866-5928, will be updated daily. The Umatilla Chemical Disposal Outreach Office, 190 E. Main Street, Hermiston, Ore., is another source for ongoing information. Operating hours are Mondays – Fridays, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Phone number is 541-564-9339.

www.cma.army.mil



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For anyone having questions about emergency preparedness, call the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP). In Oregon, call 1-877-367-2737; in Washington, call 1-800-841-7953; on the internet, www.csepp.net.

NOTE

Photos of today's operation will be posted on the following web site: www.csepp.net. Click on the "Current Events" icon.

www.cma.army.mil

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