



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

Umatilla Chemical Depot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Aug. 31, 2005
TIME: 5 p.m.

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Depot monitor detects trace amount of chemical agent vapor

UMATILLA CHEMICAL DEPOT, Hermiston, Ore. – A depot chemical operations monitoring crew detected a trace amount of GB Sarin chemical agent vapor this afternoon inside a depot storage structure storing 750-pound bombs.

The crew was conducting routine “headwall” monitoring operations with standard mobile air-monitoring equipment. Headwall monitoring allows crews to connect external monitoring lines to pre-positioned lines inside a structure, also called an “igloo,” through a port connection without having to open the igloo door. The structure has 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. Depot crews will continue to take readings and monitor the structure.

Even though the reading was so low it was not harmful to the public or the environment, depot officials notify the public when such incidents occur. They also notify off-post emergency operations centers in Umatilla and Morrow counties, Ore., Benton County, Wash., those in Oregon and Washington states, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

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