



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

Umatilla Chemical Depot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 13, 2008
11:15 a.m.

For more information contact:
Bruce Henrickson - Public Affairs Office
(541) 564-7081 or (541) 564-5312

Hal McCune – Washington Defense Group
(541) 564-7304

One-third of Umatilla chemical agent tonnage destroyed 86 percent of total number of munitions destroyed

UMATILLA CHEMICAL DEPOT, Hermiston, Ore. – Workers at the Umatilla Chemical Depot (UMCD) and Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) have safely transported and destroyed one-third of the chemical agent tonnage originally stored in the depot's chemical weapons stockpile. This also means 86 percent of the total number of munitions in the Umatilla stockpile has been destroyed. The destruction milestone was reached last week.

"This is a community milestone as well as a credit to our workers," said Mike Strong, UMCD Army site project manager. "It took years of effort and partnership to safely build, test and operate the plant to get us to this point."

"Most important is that this milestone was achieved safely and while protecting the environment," said Doug Hamrick, project general manager for Washington Defense Group. Washington Defense built and operates the disposal plant for the Army. "Our work force is dedicated to maintaining that standard as we work to complete our mission."

The United States is destroying its chemical munitions according to the international Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) treaty. The CWC treaty measures chemical weapons disposal in terms of agent tonnage destroyed rather than number of munitions. About 60 percent of the entire Umatilla stockpile tonnage is mustard blister agent in large bulk containers or "ton containers," which have not yet been destroyed.

"Safely handling and moving each munition is essential," said Lt. Col. Bob Stein, depot commander. "We must remain vigilant until we finish moving and destroying the last chemical weapon in our stockpile."

The UMCD is currently processing 155mm diameter VX artillery projectiles. Overall, the UMCD is a little more than half way through the VX nerve agent disposal campaign. Workers have destroyed about 237 tons of VX agent contained in 14,519 rockets and warheads, 156 aircraft spray tanks, and more than 20 thousand 155mm projectiles. The remaining VX agent is contained in 8-inch diameter artillery projectiles and land mines.

-more-

www.cma.army.mil



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

Umatilla Chemical Depot

The last of 1,014 tons of GB (sarin) nerve agent were destroyed July 8, 2007. The completed Umatilla GB campaign included about 155,500 chemical munitions including 91,442 rockets and warheads, more than 2,400 bombs, and more than 51,000 artillery projectiles.

When all VX is gone, only mustard blister agent will remain on the depot. At the current rate of processing, the last of the VX munitions will be destroyed by early 2009. Then, after several months to prepare the plant for processing mustard ton containers, the final campaign to destroy mustard agent is planned to begin before the end of 2009.

###

Note to media: "Washington Defense Group" is the former "Washington Group International." It is a part of URS Corporation's EG&G Division. Management and staffing of this Umatilla government contractor has remained consistent.

www.cma.army.mil

C R E A T I N G A S A F E R T O M O R R O W