



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

Umatilla Chemical Depot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Umatilla chemical munitions disposal to resume in early June

UMATILLA CHEMICAL DEPOT, Hermiston, Ore. – The Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) plans to restart chemical munitions disposal by early June. Processing stopped on May 14 when Liquid Incinerator (LIC) No. 1 shut down after Quench Tower piping inadvertently plugged. Liquids backed up into the hot primary and secondary chambers, releasing steam and smoke in a small area of the plant.

The disposal plant has two Liquid Incinerators. Processing is expected to resume in early June utilizing LIC No. 2, which has been undergoing a two-month planned maintenance outage to re-brick the furnace. That maintenance will soon be completed. LIC No. 2 can begin processing liquids after a 10-day curing period and final checks.

“We originally planned for redundant equipment in key areas of the plant,” said Mike Strong, Army site project manager. “Having two liquid incinerators gives us the option of restarting processing as we continue to inspect and repair equipment damaged on May 14.”

Chemical agent was not being processed on May 14. There was no danger to the public or the environment. The event was safely contained within the disposal plant under engineering controls. Inspections and repairs are continuing on LIC No. 1.

The Liquid Incinerators burn chemical agent and spent decontamination solution. The Quench Tower is part of the disposal plant’s Pollution Abatement System (PAS).

When munitions processing resumes, the 155mm diameter VX artillery projectile campaign will continue. The plant has destroyed more than 21,000 of those munitions. The current processing delay will not significantly affect the plant’s processing schedule. The 155mm projectile campaign is expected to be completed this summer, followed by 8-inch diameter VX projectiles and VX land mines. This will complete the VX agent disposal campaign, which will be followed by a plant changeover to process mustard (HD) blister agent bulk containers.

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