



# PRESS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

## Umatilla Chemical Depot

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **UMCDF destroys oldest mustard ton container stored at UMCD**

**Umatilla Chemical Depot, Hermiston, Ore.** – The Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) today destroyed the oldest mustard ton container stored at the Umatilla Chemical Depot.

The 70-year-old ton container was manufactured in 1940. In 1946, it was filled with 1,768 pounds of mustard agent at the Rocky Mt. Arsenal, near Denver, Colo., and later transported to UMCD between 1962-1969, where it remained in storage until its disposal. Depot employees nicknamed the container “Grandpa.” Depot maps identified its storage structure as “Grandpa’s House.”

In a statement to UMCDF workers for disposal of the oldest ton container in Umatilla’s storage as well as recent progress on disposal of mustard ton containers, Carmen Spencer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Elimination of Chemical Weapons), said “Thank you for the job you do every day, thanks for gutting it out through difficult times. UMCDF is positioned very well for continued success. Achieving the treaty date is within our reach.” Spencer will be visiting local, state and federal officials in the Hermiston-Pendleton area this week.

**(MORE)**

“Disposal of ‘Grandpa’ is another positive step forward in eliminating the chemical stockpile at Umatilla Chemical Depot.” said Lt. Col. Kris Perkins, depot commander. “We remain focused on our mission to safely and compliantly destroy the remaining chemical stockpile to ensure increased safety of the surrounding communities and our nation.”

Unitary chemical munitions were shipped to the depot from 1962 to 1969. The Army planned to ship chemical weapons from Okinawa to the depot in the late Sixties, but Oregon Gov. Tom McCall objected along with Northwest Congressional representatives.

President Richard Nixon later signed an order stopping further shipments of unitary chemical weapons to the depot.

The Depot itself will be celebrating its 69th birthday this October. Originally built to support the WWII effort, the Depot first received conventional munitions in 1941. All of the conventional munitions were removed from the depot in 1994 after years of depot support during World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam and the Gulf War.

**(Photos included)**

- 1. Photo of the Oldest Mustard Ton Container stored at the Umatilla Chemical Depot destroyed today the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility.**



2. Before its destruction, UMCD and UMCDF officials said goodbye to the oldest ton container in the UMCDF stockpile. They included Wendell Wrzesinski, UMCDF Field Office, Lt. Col. Kris Perkins, UMCD commander, Kim Jackson, Operations Manager, Carl Bernat, Process Supervisor, Troy Bair, Munition Handler, Craig Hams, Munition Handler, James Clarke, Area Supervisor, and Paul Brower, Munition Handler.

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3. **Carmen Spencer, (middle), Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Elimination of Chemical Weapons) views the disposal of the oldest mustard ton container today from the control room of the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility along with Dennis Legel, Director of the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program, Dept. of the Army, and Heather Callahan, UMCDF control room employee. Spencer was visiting the site today.**

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