



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

Umatilla Chemical Depot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

CMA Public Affairs Office
Greg Mahall, (410) 652-8741

Worker Exposure Status Update

Umatilla Chemical Depot, Hermiston, Ore. – The following is an update on a worker's exposure to mustard agent March 17 while doing maintenance in the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility's main processing building.

- The employee has been receiving medical evaluation and care since the incident occurred. The skin blister is healing well and no additional medical treatment or intervention is anticipated. The employee has not missed a scheduled day of work.
- Project leadership has determined that there was an exposure to mustard agent during the March 17 entry. This conclusion is supported by a review of plant activities, video records and agent monitoring, and by the worker showing the clinical signs of abnormal skin redness followed by blistering.
- The worker's blood and urine samples will be analyzed in two off-site laboratories in an attempt to provide independent confirmation of agent exposure. Lab results are expected to be made available 7-10 days following arrival at the laboratories.
- A root-cause analysis of the event continues. Subject matter experts from the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency headquarters at Aberdeen, Md., and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Ga., are on-site to assist.
- Meetings have been ongoing since March 17 with plant employees to share information about the incident. All entries into the facility's toxic areas remain upgraded to the highest protection level, pending completion of ongoing reviews and subsequent actions.
- "This is a reminder that mustard agent is an extremely hazardous substance," said Mike Strong, the U.S. Army Site Project Manager at the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility. "It's absolutely critical that we take care of our employees and take measures to prevent this from happening again."

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