



U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL
MATERIALS AGENCY

PRESS RELEASE

Umatilla Chemical Depot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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Power being restored to depot after storm

Umatilla Chemical Depot, Hermiston, Ore.- Power has been restored to the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility and to most of the depot following yesterday afternoon's windstorm.

Depot maintenance personnel are currently assessing damage to several power poles and power lines serving the depot. Primary focus today is damage assessment and returning the depot to normal operations. Chemical operations crews are also inspecting all chemical storage structures called "igloos."

Following gusts from 55 to 85 miles per hour during the late-afternoon windstorm, the depot experienced power outages. Back-up generators were used to restore power lost during the storm.

Chemical operations both inside the chemical storage area and at the disposal facility are on hold until depot officials decide that it is safe to resume.

"The Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility and the chemical storage structures are designed to withstand such storms. Safety and security remain our top priority, and chemical storage operations and munitions processing will not be resumed until the necessary criteria for safe operations is met," said Lt. Col. Donna Rutten, depot commander.

Following is a recap of information provided in two news releases May 19:

- There were no reports of injuries.
- There was an unconfirmed report of a tornado touching down near the depot's nerve agent storage area.
- There were no chemical operations being conducted in the chemical agent storage areas prior to the storm. All igloo doors were closed.
- A depot weather tower had readings of sustained wind speeds in excess of 55 mph and gusts in excess of 85 mph.
- The UMCDF was not processing agent when the storm hit.

- UMCDF administrative personnel were evacuated to a pre-determined depot staging area and moved to a depot building in the administrative area along with incoming shift personnel.
- UMCDF personnel remaining at the plant during the storm were masked as a precaution.
- The UMCDF temporarily lost back-up generator capability, but it was restored in about 45 minutes.
- Monitoring continued inside the plant shortly after the windstorm, but there was no indication of agent outside of engineering controls.

A depot crisis management team assembled at the depot Operations Center following the storm. Depot officials notified off-post emergency operations centers in Umatilla and Morrow counties, Ore., Benton County, Wash., those in Oregon and Washington states, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and the Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality.

Anyone needing more information about emergency preparedness should phone the following CSEPP toll-free numbers: 1-877-367-2737 in Morrow and Umatilla counties, Ore., and 1-800-841-7953 in Benton County, Wash. Information will be available at: www.csepp.net

Community Advisory: Please do not call 911 or the Depot for additional information. Tune into your local radio or television stations for emergency preparedness information. In Oregon, tune to KUMA Radio, FM 107.7, and in Washington, tune to KONA Radio, AM 610, FM 105.3.

More information will be released as it becomes available.

The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) is a dedicated team whose expertise and oversight sets the standards of excellence and leadership in safely storing the nation's aging chemical weapons and developing programs aimed at effectively recovering, treating and ultimately eliminating the nation's chemical warfare materiel. CMA personnel also enhance national security by providing specialized products and capabilities to our nation's Warfighters, and homeland defense and response capabilities. CMA encourages public participation and is committed to worker and public safety, and environmental stewardship. For more information about CMA and its programs, visit www.cma.army.mil

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