



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

Umatilla Chemical Depot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rocket fire reported today

UMATILLA CHEMICAL DEPOT, Hermiston, Ore. – A fire occurred this morning during the processing of an M55 rocket in one of two Explosive Containment Rooms (ECRs) at the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF).

Depot officials reported the fire, which occurred at 9:45 a.m. in ECR-A, was extinguished. The rocket's chemical agent, GB Sarin, had been drained and the rocket was at a shear machine when the incident occurred.

As with most of the previous fires, today's fire occurred during the fifth of seven shears. The ECR was under engineering controls so the fire and chemical agent were contained within the room. There were no injuries.

Because of today's fire the A line will have to be assessed before processing resumes. The B line is available and could be used for processing today.

There was no harm to UMCDF workers, the public or the environment.

System operators processed 125 rockets this morning before the fire occurred. More than 65,000 M55 rockets containing GB Sarin chemical agent have been processed since the start of chemical disposal operations in September 2004.

Depot officials notified the 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.

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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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