



# PRESS RELEASE

## U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

For Immediate Release  
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### Army Releases Updated Chemical Weapons Destruction Schedule Estimates Go Beyond Extended 2012 Treaty Deadline

**ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md.** — The U.S. Army today announced that it will not meet the United States' international obligation to have the entire U.S. chemical weapons stockpile destroyed by the April 29, 2012 deadline afforded by the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

Under the CWC treaty, the United States had 10 years from April 29, 1997, when the treaty entered into force to destroy its declared stockpile of 31,500 (27,768 metric tons) tons of chemical agents. This 10-year window included a provision for a one-time, five-year extension. This extension request was recently submitted to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the international body which oversees the implementation of the Convention's provisions. As part of its request to the OPCW to extend its destruction deadline, the U.S. points out that it will continue to seek opportunities to improve its chemical weapon destruction progress with the goal of meeting the April 2012 deadline, or as soon as feasible thereafter.

The United States has completed destruction of all initially declared Category 3 items, met its first two intermediate chemical weapons destruction deadlines prior to the required dates, and is working towards meeting its third intermediate chemical weapons destruction deadline to have 45 percent of the chemical weapons stockpile destroyed by December 31, 2007.

As of May 3, 2006, the United States has destroyed 10,125 metric tons since Entry into Force of the CWC, or 36.5 percent of its declared inventory of chemical agent.

Several factors have contributed to the current requirement for an extension request:

- Unanticipated delays in obtaining approval of environmental permits for the start of operations;
- Lower than estimated destruction rates;
- Facility work stoppages to investigate and resolve problems;
- Development of protocols to improve operational safety;
- Deteriorating munitions which have complicated handling and destruction processing;
- Facility start-up delays due to additional community emergency preparedness requirements;

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"The schedule released today has been compiled with the best data available in the history of the program," said Michael A. Parker, the Director of the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, the organization charged with the safe storage and disposal of the weapons stockpile. "As we gain more and more operational experience from destroying weapons at each facility, we share that experience across all sites using a lessons-learned approach and apply that knowledge in all we do, including schedule projections. I believe what we have is the best representative look at the future of the program, ever."

CMA has completed destruction of the stockpiles formerly located at Johnston Atoll and Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. The timeline projects chemical agent destruction operations extending beyond the 2012 deadline at four of the CMA's five operational plants. Only CMA's Newport, Ind., facility is expected to complete agent disposal operations prior to the 2012 treaty extension date. The other four active disposal sites are in Alabama, Arkansas, Oregon and Utah.

"These schedules are what we know right now, taking into account our experience to date," Parker said. "They reflect a mark on the wall that indicates that if we do nothing different than what we have done in the past, these are the schedules we can expect."

"We will, however, continue to seek opportunities to accelerate these destruction time frames and complete destruction as soon as possible," Parker continued. "This will be done without any compromise to safety. The cornerstone of our program has always been and will continue to be the safety of our workers, our communities, and our environment."

These schedules do not include the Kentucky and Colorado stockpiles currently under the destruction purview of the Department of Defense's Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives program. Their schedule estimates are expected to be presented by the Program Manager for the re-design efforts in August 2006.

"The U.S. Army continues to be the world's leader with the greatest history of expertise in the disposal of chemical weapons," he added. "No other nation in the world has achieved the level of progress the U.S. Army has in safely disposing of the U.S. chemical weapons stockpile."

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*The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency is responsible for safely storing and eliminating the United States' aging chemical weapons and agent stockpiles and for the safe elimination of recovered chemical materiel. 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](http://www.cma.army.mil).*

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