



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

Umatilla Chemical Depot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VX spray tank disposal begins at Umatilla

UMATILLA CHEMICAL DEPOT, Hermiston, Ore. – The Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) safely destroyed its first VX nerve agent spray tank today. VX-filled spray tanks, which were designed to be mounted on military aircraft, are being destroyed simultaneous with the VX M55 rockets campaign, which began on Oct. 29.

“The VX campaign is going safely and according to plan,” said Don Barclay, site project manager for the Army. “Our team of dedicated workers is making steady progress in this first phase of VX disposal.”

The disposal plant is designed with multiple processing lines, allowing simultaneous processing of different types and sizes of munitions. Spray tanks are significantly larger than other chemical munitions and contain 160 gallons of VX agent. Because of their size, they are transported on flatbed trailers from storage to the disposal plant in the sealed overpack containers in which they were stored.

“Spray tanks are 15 and a half feet long and present a new challenge for UMCDF,” said Bob Dikeman, plant manager for URS Washington Division, the company that built and operates the plant. “But we’ve practiced and planned for this portion of the VX campaign and, as always, safety and environmental compliance will come first.”

Depot storage crews began moving spray tanks to the disposal facility on Nov. 19. Workers also moved a bulk container or “ton container” of VX agent to the plant on the same day. It is the only ton container of VX located at Umatilla. It contains VX agent from a mid-1980s “punch and drain” campaign to eliminate leaking munitions stored at the depot. Workers plan to dispose of the VX ton container within the next week.

The overall VX disposal campaign is expected to take about a year and a half to complete. It will include VX rockets, spray tanks, artillery projectiles, land mines and the single ton container. The UMCDF will then changeover to process HD mustard blister agent, which will be the third and final agent campaign at Umatilla.

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