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U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency

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Army Completes Chemical Stockpile Destruction at Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility

Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. (Oct. 25, 2011) - The Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF), located at Umatilla Chemical Depot (UMCD), Oregon, today completed the disposal of the chemical weapons stockpile stored at UMCD.

The UMCDF is a subordinate element of the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA). Headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, CMA has the mission to provide safe, secure storage of the Nation's chemical weapons and to safely destroy 90 percent of the Nation's chemical weapons stockpile.

"This is a great day for the U.S. Army, the people of Oregon and our Nation," said CMA Director Conrad Whyne. "Thanks to the steadfast dedication of the Umatilla team -- the United States Army, its civilian workers and contractors -- the Umatilla community, the state of Oregon, and our Nation are all safer today. I could not be more proud of our workforce."

The UMCDF had the mission to provide safe and environmentally compliant chemical agent destruction operations using incineration technology while ensuring maximum protection of the installation and community population. Umatilla Chemical Depot, also a subordinate element of CMA, had the mission to provide the safe and secure maintenance, storage and transport of 12 percent of the original U.S. stockpile of chemical munitions and containers. The original inventory of chemical weapons stored

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at UMCD included 220,604 nerve agent and mustard agent munitions and containers holding 3,717 tons of chemical agent. Destruction operations began Sept. 8, 2004.

"The vast experience of CMA employees and contractors -- both at the site and at headquarters -- was used to build, operate, and oversee the work to safely accomplish today's destruction milestone. This same cooperation has been demonstrated for the successful operation of CMA storage and disposal facilities across the Nation," said Col. John Lemondes, CMA Project Manager for Chemical Stockpile Elimination.

The UMCD and UMCDF will now begin closure operations, which will continue for up to 48 months. Closure operations will be conducted in accordance with facility and storage area end-states as agreed upon with all appropriate stakeholders.

The United States established the Chemical Demilitarization Program in 1986 to remove the threat posed by continued storage of outdated chemical weapons and inspire a worldwide commitment to the elimination of an entire class of weapons of mass destruction. In April 1997 the United States came under the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention, thereby requiring the safe destruction of 100 percent of the nation's chemical weapons by April 2007. The United States petitioned to have the original deadline extended to April 2012 (an extension allowed by the convention) and was granted this five-year extension.

The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency has safely completed disposal operations and closed facilities in Edgewood, Md.; Newport, Ind.; and Johnston Atoll, located 800 miles southwest of Hawaii. The Agency has also completed disposal operations in Anniston, Ala. and Pine Bluff, Ark. and is in the process of closing those chemical agent disposal facilities. CMA continues to safely store and destroy the chemical weapons stockpile in Tooele, Utah. CMA also safely stores the chemical weapons stockpiles in Richmond, Ky. and Pueblo, Colo. The disposal of these munitions falls under the purview of the Program Manager for Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives, a separate Department of Defense program.

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