



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 6, 2009

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Mustard Munitions Processing Begins at ANCDF

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) officials announced today that chemical munitions demilitarization operations resumed Thursday afternoon, July 2, at the Anniston Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (ANCDF). ANCDF is located at Anniston Army Depot, Ala.

Anniston Chemical Activity (ANCA) employees safely moved the first containers with 4.2-inch mustard-filled munitions Monday, June 29. Large, sealed metal containers, called Enhanced Onsite Containers, are used to move chemical munitions from storage igloos to the ANCDF to ensure the safety of the work force and environment.

Conrad F. Whyne, CMA director, said, "We reviewed the efforts the Anniston team accomplished prior to their beginning operations. And we also reviewed the pre-operational reviews. We have concluded ANCA and ANCDF employees are ready and prepared to resume safe demilitarization operations."

ANCA Commander Lt. Col. Andrew M. Herbst said, "The ANCA Team is dedicated, skilled, and well trained. The team is eager to get back to the business of safely moving mustard munitions. Like the successful nerve agent campaign, the ANCA Team is well prepared to step up and support the final ANCDF disposal campaign."

ANCDF employees accepted the sealed containers of chemical munitions and safely staged them within the facility. After other munitions handlers manually placed the mortars on a conveyor system, ANCDF control room operators monitored robotic equipment that methodically disassembled, drained and demilitarized the first few mortars.

Timothy K. Garrett, ANCDF government project manager, said, "Our first day of mustard agent disposal operations was very successful. Initial operations will be slow and deliberate as crews from all four shifts learn the nuances of processing mustard munitions."

All 361,802 liquid nerve agent-filled munitions at Anniston Army Depot were safely processed between August 9, 2003, and December 24, 2008. Liquid mustard agent munitions may have thickened since manufacture. Garrett said, "Regardless, the Army's exhaustive lessons learned program has thoroughly documented experiences at other processing plants. The Anniston team is prepared to safely complete its mission of eliminating the chemical munitions stockpile at the depot."

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Robert C. Love, Westinghouse Anniston site project manager, said, "Since the last VX-filled land mine was processed on Christmas Eve, the Westinghouse Anniston team has worked hard to decontaminate the plant, change and maintain equipment and learn revised procedures. It is time to begin our next and final disposal campaign."

More than 56 percent of the chemical agent that has been stored at Anniston Army Depot since 1963 has been safely destroyed. Nationally, the U.S. Army chemical munitions disposal activities have safely destroyed more than 63 percent of the entire U.S. stockpile.

The ANCDF is scheduled to be completely decontaminated and decommissioned once the Anniston mustard campaign is finished. The campaign may conclude in early 2012.

CMA's destruction of chemical weapons is complete at Newport, Ind.; Aberdeen, Md.; and Johnston Island. With ANCDF's start of operations last Thursday, final chemical agent destruction operations are now under way at CMA's four remaining destruction sites: Tooele, Utah; Umatilla, Ore.; Pine Bluff, Ark.; and Anniston, Ala. CMA's destruction sites should complete operations in time to meet the 2012 Chemical Weapons Convention treaty deadline. CMA continues to safely store chemical agent munitions near Richmond, Ky., and at Pueblo, Colo. For more information about CMA, visit <http://www.cma.army.mil>.

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Photographs with captions of Anniston's start of its mustard agent destruction campaign, as well as other Anniston operations photographs, are available at: <http://www.cma.army.mil/multimedialogallery.aspx?criteria=site&value=ANCDF>. Left click your mouse once on the desired photograph to enlarge it and to obtain the caption and download instructions. All photographs are provided courtesy of the Anniston Chemical Activity Public Affairs Office.

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