



U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL
MATERIALS AGENCY

FACT SHEET

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Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility

The Chemical Stockpile Elimination Project: *Destroying Stored Chemical Weapons at the Pine Bluff Arsenal*

Chemical Weapons Disposal History

The United States Army has more than 90 years of experience with chemical weapons disposal. From 1917 through the 1960s, the Army employed commonly accepted disposal methods for that period, such as open-pit burning, land burial and ocean dumping. With heightened environmental awareness and the increased technological advances of the late 1960s, the Army abandoned these disposal practices. In the 1970s, the Army researched, developed, tested and implemented the more sophisticated, environmentally sound disposal methods of high-temperature incineration and chemical neutralization.

Industrial-scale agent munitions disposal was initiated at the Chemical Agent Munitions Disposal System (CAMDS) at Tooele, Utah. CAMDS was constructed primarily to research and test the new incineration and neutralization methods. Based upon its successful experience with operations, the Army selected incineration as its baseline technology to destroy its stored chemical weapons. The National Academy of Science's National Research Council, a private, nonprofit institution that provides scientific, technological and health policy advice under a congressional charter, endorsed this decision in 1984.

Destruction Begins

The Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System (JACADS) began operations using the baseline technology in 1990. Located approximately 825 miles southwest of Hawaii, it was the nation's first full-scale prototype facility designed specifically for the disposal of chemical

agent munitions. Like all prototypes, JACADS refined its processes as disposal procedures progressed. The last of the Johnston Island chemical agents were destroyed on Nov. 29, 2000, making JACADS the first U.S. chemical agent disposal facility to complete operations and facility closure.

Lessons learned at CAMDS and JACADS were incorporated into the design and operation of another baseline technology facility in Tooele, Utah. The Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (TOCDF) was the first full-scale disposal facility constructed in the continental United States and is the largest facility the Army will operate. TOCDF began operations in August 1996. TOCDF has successfully destroyed 100 percent of its stockpile of GB nerve agent and VX agent, and its last campaign to destroy mustard agent is currently underway.

In addition to TOCDF, there are seven other facilities in the continental United States that contain stored chemical agent slated for disposal. Of these, the baseline technology is being used in Pine Bluff, Ark., Anniston, Ala., and Umatilla, Ore.

Neutralization technology is being used to destroy the VX stockpile at Newport, Ind., and was successfully used to destroy the entire mustard stockpile at the Edgewood area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. Further, under the Department of Defense's Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives program, a facility in Pueblo, Colo., will use neutralization followed by biotreatment to destroy chemical agent. The facility in Richmond, Ky., will use neutralization followed by supercritical water oxidation.



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The Chemical Stockpile Elimination Project:

Destroying Stored Chemical Weapons at the Pine Bluff Arsenal (continued)

Destroying Chemical Weapons at the Pine Bluff Arsenal

Groundbreaking for the Pine Bluff Arsenal (PBA) was held Dec. 2, 1941, less than a week before the bombing of U.S. Navy facilities at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. When the United States declared war soon after, the construction schedule was stepped up. The first items produced at PBA, four-pound incendiary bombs for Great Britain, were readied on July 6, 1942.

Pine Bluff originally had the second largest chemical agent stockpile with about 12 percent of the total U.S. stockpile. The Pine Bluff stockpile consists of rockets, land mines and ton containers.

Construction on the Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (PBCDF) began Jan. 15, 1999, following permitting by the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality and the Environmental Protection Agency. The PBCDF site covers 26 acres. Construction of the disposal facility was completed in November 2002. After a thorough systemization period, agent operations began in March 2005.

Protecting Communities, Workers, and the Environment

The Army is committed to ensuring the health and safety of the communities surrounding the stockpiles and the environment. To this end, the Chemical Stockpile Elimination Project under the Chemical Materials Agency is conducted in compliance with and, in many cases, surpasses numerous federal, state and local regulations and requirements. This is true for the baseline technology as well as for any alternative technology being investigated that may prove to be safe, efficient and ready for timely disposal as mandated by the Chemical Weapons Convention.

In the past, the Army maintained a stockpile of chemical agents and munitions to deter other countries from using similar weapons on U.S. or allied troops. Today, the Army's vast experience is being applied to the destruction of those chemical weapons. As the world leader in disposal technology, the Army is well qualified to accomplish this mission in the safest, most efficient manner possible.