

Tribal Natural Resources director explains first Five Foods



Eric Quaempts, Director of the Department of Natural Resources of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, spoke to a gathering of depot employees on Wednesday, Jan. 7, about five “First Foods” served in Tribal meal rituals. His appearance was part of a depot Equal Employment Opportunity series of presentations honoring different cultures — National American Indian Heritage Month in this case.

For thousands of years, the five First Foods have been served, and in the same order, at Tribal longhouse feasts — water, salmon, deer, cous (roots), and huckleberries. Quaempts explained the order has never changed, though modern methods of harvesting and preserving these foods have been adopted. New foods have also been added to Tribal meals, though they aren’t surrounded by ritual and don’t carry the same “power and elegance” of First Foods for Tribal members.

Tribal members harvest First Foods throughout the region, and retained rights to do so on unclaimed federal lands according to an 1855 treaty. Protection of First Foods resources is a priority for the Tribes, and goes hand in hand with environmental protection.

“We take the safety of our environment seriously,” said Lt. Col. Bob Stein, depot commander and host of the event. “We make sure we’re protecting depot and surrounding land as we safely dispose of chemical weapons.”

Quaempts is a wildlife biologist with extensive interdisciplinary experience in forestry, wildlife, range, reforestation, fisheries, and fire management programs. Prior to his Tribal work, he was employed by the US Forest Service. He’s an enrolled member of the Yakama Nation and has lived on the Umatilla reservation most of his life.

UMCDF Highlights

- It has been 915 days, or more than 4 million work hours, since a lost-time accident occurred at the UMCDF (July 7, 2006).

Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility Processing

(Dec. 19, 2008 - Jan. 7, 2009)

Total number of VX-filled land mines destroyed this period	
Total VX land mines destroyed to date	11,685
Percentage of VX land mines destroyed to date	100
Pounds of VX agent destroyed this period	0
Pounds of total VX agent destroyed to date	734,262
Total munitions destroyed to date since start of operations (Sept. 7, 2004) <i>including non-stockpile GB and VX ton containers</i>	217,969
Nominal tons of chemical agent destroyed to date	1,377.86
Percentage of total agent tons destroyed	37.07

UMCD/UMCDF Milestones

- **Nov. 5, 2008:** Last VX mines destroyed in the Deactivation Furnace System (DFS).
- **Nov. 4, 2008:** Last VX mines transported from depot storage to disposal plant.
- **Sept. 25, 2008:** First VX mines transported from depot storage to disposal plant and destroyed in the(DFS).
- **Aug. 6, 2008:** Completed VX 8-inch projectile campaign.
- **July 16, 2008:** Processed first VX 8-inch projectile in the Metal Parts Furnace (MPF).
- **July 15, 2008:** First VX 8-inch projectiles transported from depot storage to disposal plant.
- **June 27, 2008:** Completed VX 155mm projectile campaign.
- **March 21, 2008:** Destroyed first VX 155mm projectile in the MPF.
- **March 20, 2008:** First VX 155mm projectiles transported from depot storage to disposal plant.
- **Jan. 23, 2008:** Completed VX rocket campaign.
- **Dec. 24, 2007:** Completed VX spray tank campaign.
- **Nov. 26, 2007:** Processed the non-stockpile VX ton container.
- **Nov. 23, 2007:** Destroyed the first VX spray tanks in the MPF.
- **Nov. 19, 2007:** First VX spray tank transported from depot storage to disposal plant.
- **Nov. 9, 2007:** First VX chemical agent destroyed in the Liquid Incinerator (LIC).
- **Oct. 29, 2007:** Processed the first VX M55 rockets in the DFS.
- **Oct. 26, 2007:** First VX M55 rockets transported from depot storage to disposal plant.
- **July 8, 2007:** Completed GB munitions campaign.

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