



NEWS RELEASE



Newport Chemical Depot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 27, 2007

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NEWPORT CHEMICAL DEPOT REACHES 50-PERCENT VX DESTRUCTION

NEWPORT CHEMICAL DEPOT, Ind. --- Workers at the Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (NECDF) have destroyed more than half of the VX stored at the Newport Chemical Depot (NECD).

The depot surpassed the 50-percent destruction milestone on Thursday, April 26. "We continue to make our community and environment safer every day we maintain destruction operations," said NECD Commander Lt. Col. Brian Lynch. "We look forward to the day that the entire Newport VX stockpile is eliminated."

"Safely reaching this milestone is a significant accomplishment for all of the Newport team," said Jeff Brubaker, Army site project manager. "We will focus on maintaining our high level of safety and professionalism throughout the remainder of the project."

Brubaker added that since the wastewater from the VX neutralization process is being transported to Veolia Environmental Services in Port Arthur, Texas, for final treatment, the U.S. now will begin receiving credit for destruction of the Newport stockpile under the Chemical Weapons Convention treaty. Treaty credit for agent destruction is given only after the waste, also known as hydrolysate (hy-drawl*-uh-sate), has undergone the final treatment process. The Army began shipping the waste for treatment on April 16, and Brubaker said it will be several months before the accumulated hydrolysate currently stored at Newport is transported and treated.

NECD is one of the nation's chemical agent storage and destruction sites managed by the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency. Chemical agent VX was produced at NECD in the 1960s. During production, workers filled munitions with chemical agent at the Newport facility before transporting them by rail to U.S. defense sites worldwide. In 1968, production halted and the remaining agent was placed in safe storage. For nearly 40 years, the Newport work force has safely stored more than 1000 tons of liquid chemical agent. Workers began destroying the VX stockpile utilizing neutralization technology on May 5, 2005.

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