



# NEWS RELEASE

## U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency

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### United States eliminates chemical weapons production facilities *Demolition milestone reached four months early*

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – When the United States ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention on April 29, 1997 it took on a number of technically challenging responsibilities. Among the most daunting included destroying the world's most advanced chemical weapons production facilities using environmentally responsible methods, and to do so within 10 years under the review of international inspectors.

Despite the technical challenges of destroying five unique facilities with daunting regulatory challenges spread over as many states, the United States not only met this milestone but completed the mission with four months to spare.

The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA), charged with overseeing the mission, confirmed that the last declared chemical warfare production facility, a structure at Pine Bluff Arsenal, Ark., that once was part of the Pine Bluff Integrated Binary Production Facilities, was demolished on Dec. 28, 2006.

“This significant achievement shows the Army's commitment to meeting our national and international obligations to eliminate our legacy of chemical warfare programs in a manner that protects the environment today and for future generations,” said Laurence Gottschalk, CMA's Project Manager for Non-Stockpile Chemical Materiel. “We share this achievement with the dedicated employees of the U.S. Army, the Chemical Materials Agency, the Program Manager for Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Tennessee Valley Authority, and our support contractors, who worked tirelessly for more than a decade to make this possible.”

Though the United States began destroying its former chemical warfare production facilities before CWC ratification, it made considerable progress toward milestone completion in 2006. For example, on April 22, workers completed destroying the Newport VX Production Facility at Newport Chemical Depot, Ind., where from 1962-1968 the nation produced its entire inventory of 4,400 tons of the nerve agent VX. On Sept. 6, workers at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., demolished a structure used to distill mustard agent produced at APG.

The milestone becomes official after inspectors from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the international agency based in The Hague charged with overseeing chemical weapons destruction worldwide, issues official recognition of the achievement to the U.S. Department of State, expected later this year.

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“Completion of this project enables us to leave a safer world for this and future generations,” said Dale Ormond, CMA’s Acting Director. “The Army removed these facilities under strict environmental controls with no major injuries while recycling tons of steel and other materials. The United States is proud to not only meet, but also exceed, this important international obligation.”

The Non-Stockpile Chemical Materiel Project is CMA’s division overseeing the demolition mission. NSCMP was responsible for destruction of the FPFs at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., Newport Chemical Depot, Ind., and Pine Bluff Arsenal, Ark.

Before the treaty entered into force in 1997, several facilities were destroyed. In 1993, the Phosphate Development Works in Muscle Shoals, Ala., was destroyed. This plant made precursors for the production of the nerve agent sarin (GB) for use in production facilities at Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Colo. Rocky Mountain Arsenal demolished four facilities on its Commerce City, Colo., installation. RMA demolished the DC Production Facility in 1995; the Mustard (HD) Fill Facility in 2002; the HD Distillation Facility in 2001; and the GB (sarin) Production and Fill Facility in 2003. GB is the non-persistent nerve agent sarin, while DC, a precursor chemical, was used to make sarin. Mustard (HD) is a blister agent produced in the United States until the 1940s.

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