



**Program Executive Office
Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives**

MEDIA TOOLKIT

VX M55 Rocket Campaign

**Blue Grass Chemical Agent-
Destruction Pilot Plant**

Updated: April 26, 2023

Historic Video Footage: Completed Destruction Campaigns at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant

The Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant, known as BGCAPP, is safely destroying the chemical weapons stockpile stored at the Blue Grass Army Depot near Richmond, Kentucky.

The following video clips show historic footage of a completed destruction campaign at the BGCAPP main plant facility, where nerve agent was neutralized. Portions of this footage have been blurred in accordance with Department of Defense guidelines.

Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant Main Plant Completed VX M55 Rocket Operations in April 2022

Main Plant: The main plant is destroying nerve agent munitions from the chemical weapons stockpile stored in Kentucky. Destruction of the M55 rockets containing VX nerve agent began July 9, 2021, and was completed April 19, 2022. This marked the elimination of the last VX nerve agent weapons in the United States chemical weapons stockpile.

- Workers Unload a Pallet of VX M55 Rockets (0:00 - 0:06)
 - Workers transfer M55 rockets from pallets used for storage and transport to a Rocket Non-Destructive Examination (RNDE) transfer cart.
- Workers Place VX M55 Rockets into the Rocket Input Assembly (0:06 - 0:14)
 - Workers place each rocket into the rocket input assembly for entry into the conveyor system that moves the rocket through the automated destruction process.
- Enhanced On-site Container (EONC) Delivery and Storage (0:14 - 0:23)
 - An EONC holding M55 rockets containing VX nerve agent is delivered to the Container Handling Building (CHB).
 - A sideloader truck then places the EONC next to another EONC inside the CHB. A portion of this footage is sped up.
 - The EONCs are containers designed to safely transport the chemical munitions from their monitored storage on the Blue Grass Army Depot to the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant for destruction.
- Workers Open and Unload M55 Rockets from the EONC (0:23 - 0:39)
 - Workers open, inspect and unload two pallets of M55 rockets from an EONC.
- Worker Removes Band from Pallet (0:39 - 0:45)
 - A worker uses a tool to cut the metal bands off the pallet of M55 rockets in preparation for unpacking the rockets.
- Unpacking and Loading Rockets onto Transfer Cart (0:45 - 0:50)
 - Workers unpack the rockets from a pallet and load them onto a transfer cart.
- RNDE Equipment (0:50 - 1:02)
 - A worker loads a transfer cart of M55 rockets into the RNDE equipment.
 - Workers examine an X-ray of the M55 rocket to look for agent leakage.

- An M55 rocket is picked up and moved to a transfer cart after being X-rayed in the RNDE equipment.
- Workers Place M55 Rockets on Conveyor (1:02 - 1:22)
 - Workers place M55 rockets onto the rocket input assembly. The rockets are then fed one at a time onto the conveyor to begin the automated destruction process.
- Control and Support Building (1:22 - 1:27)
 - Control Room operators and engineers communicate with technicians and remotely operate various systems throughout the facility.
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Footage of an M55 Rocket in Explosive Containment Vestibule (1:27 - 3:27)
 - The rocket enters the Explosive Containment Vestibule and a robot places it in the Vertical Rocket Cutting Machine.
 - The machine cuts the shipping and firing tube and the robot removes the top portion.
 - The machine then makes a second cut to separate the warhead from the motor.
 - Once separated, the first robot picks up the warhead to place it on the transfer station while a second robot places the shipping and firing tube on a conveyor to go to the Motor Packing Room.
 - The first robot turns to retrieve the rocket motor from the Vertical Rocket Cutting Machine.
 - The second robot picks up the warhead to continue its path to destruction.
- CCTV Footage of an M55 Rocket Warhead in the Explosive Containment Room (3:27 - 5:36)
 - The warhead enters the Explosive Containment Room.
 - Automated equipment punches the warhead, and the chemical agent is drained, collected and neutralized.
 - The drained warhead travels to a wrapper station to be wrapped with plastic. The plastic helps reduce agent contamination through the rest of the process.
 - A robot places the warhead in a crimper station where it is containerized.
- CCTV Footage of the Warhead Container Labeling Station (5:36 - 6:45)
 - The robots move the containerized warhead to the next room where it is labeled and placed on a Mobile Industrial Robot.
 - The robot moves the container to be placed in a skid.
- CCTV Footage of the Motor Packing Room (6:45 - 7:38)
 - A robot places the shipping and firing tube in a box for storage and later shipment for disposal.
 - The robot then places the rocket motor into a box for storage and later destruction.
- Boxes of Rocket Motors Sent for Storage (7:38 - 7:54)
 - The boxes are loaded onto a truck and are sent to a storage igloo for storage before they are later shipped for final disposal.

- Pallets of Rocket Warheads Sent for Storage (7:54 - 8:10)
 - Workers load the containerized, drained rocket warhead skids onto a truck.
 - A truck transports containerized, drained rocket warhead skids to a storage igloo for later destruction in the Static Detonation Chamber 1200.
- Hydrolysate Storage Area tanks (8:10 - 8:20)
 - The Hydrolysate Storage Area tanks store hydrolysate, the product of the neutralization of chemical agent, until it is ready to be shipped to a permitted hazardous waste treatment, storage and disposal facility. A portion of this footage is sped up.
- Clean-air Exhaust Stacks (8:20 - 8:30)
 - The Clean-air Exhaust Stacks and Filter Banks are shown at sunrise. This footage has been sped up.

Questions regarding images contained in this media toolkit can be directed to the Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office staff at bgoutreach@iem.com or 859-626-8944.