



Chemical Weapons Destruction at the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot

The [U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot](#) (PCD) is located in southeastern Colorado, encompassing approximately 23,000 acres. The depot's mission is the safe, secure storage of mustard agent in projectiles, while protecting the environment, workforce and surrounding communities. The weapons, stored and monitored at the depot since the 1950s, have been rendered obsolete and accordingly are being destroyed. This chemical weapons destruction program extensively involves the local community, in addition to state and federal regulators.



These specially designed earth-covered magazines, commonly referred to as storage igloos or bunkers are located on the highly secure U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot where all Department of Defense and Army safety and security regulations are followed.

Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant

Located within the current boundaries of the depot, the [Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant](#) (PCAPP) includes a variety of facilities for purposes including agent processing, energetic processing, control and storage, munitions storage, biotreatment, entry control, utility, laboratory, personnel maintenance and other support tasks. The Bechtel Pueblo Team (BPT) was awarded the systems contract to design, construct, systemize, pilot test, operate and close the main facility.

The [Program Executive Office, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives](#) program, known as PEO ACWA, is responsible for managing the destruction of the Pueblo chemical weapons stockpile and overseeing the BPT contract. PEO ACWA is headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

Pueblo Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office
104 W. B St. Pueblo, Colorado 81003
(719) 546-0400 • pueblooutreach@jem.com

Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant Public Affairs
(719) 549-4959

U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot Public Affairs
(719) 549-4135





Technology

On July 16, 2002, Department of Defense officials selected neutralization followed by biotreatment as the disposal technology to be used at PCD. [Neutralization followed by biotreatment](#) uses warm water to neutralize the chemical agent, effectively destroying the mustard agent molecules. The resulting hydrolysate is mostly water and thiodiglycol, a common industrial chemical that is readily biodegradable. Ordinary sewage treatment bacteria, or microbes, consume the organics in the hydrolysate. Besides being a common phenomenon in nature, the science of using microbes to help dispose of hazardous waste has existed for decades. Sewage treatment facilities across the country use microbes every day to help break down raw sewage.

Some munitions will not be able to be easily processed through the main destruction plant. These problematic munitions include those that have leaked in the past and are overpacked, as well as “rejects” whose condition does not allow for automated processing. These munitions will be safely processed in [PCAPP’s Static Detonation Chambers](#).

Public Outreach

The Pueblo Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office and the Pueblo Chemical Depot Public Affairs Office keep the community informed of issues regarding chemical weapons destruction. The offices respond to inquiries, provide information materials and coordinate guest speakers for a variety of different civic groups and organizations. The offices work closely with the Army, state regulatory agencies and local and state emergency preparedness authorities to create a comprehensive public involvement and outreach program.