



Pueblo Chemical Agent-  
Destruction Pilot Plant

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# Pueblo Plant Completes First Munitions Destruction Campaign

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## For Immediate Release

U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot, Colorado – The Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (PCAPP) team completed the destruction of nearly 300,000 155mm projectiles on Sept. 5. This marks the end of the first munitions campaign at PCAPP and the safe elimination of approximately two thirds of the original chemical agent stored at the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot.

“We proudly completed this campaign ahead of schedule and while implementing strict new protocols to keep our workforce safe amid the coronavirus pandemic,” said Walton Levi, site project manager, PCAPP.

“Our ultimate goal is keeping the workforce and community safe from these World War II era weapons,” said Col. Michael Cobb, commander, Pueblo Chemical Depot. “We use the utmost care and follow strict safety procedures when delivering the munitions from their storage igloos to PCAPP.”

“Destruction of 155mm projectiles is a great accomplishment for the PCAPP team,” said Ken Harrawood, project manager, Bechtel Pueblo Team. “Innovative solutions are key to solving issues that arise with a complex and one-of-a-kind operating facility like PCAPP. This would not have been possible without the dedication and professionalism of our amazing workforce.”

“I credit our team of employees dedicated to the munitions destruction effort, as many have spent their entire careers ridding the world of these weapons,” said Kim Jackson, plant manager, BPT/PCAPP. “We reached this milestone because of the amazing workforce and their diligence, hard work and support to the PCAPP mission.”

As of Aug. 28, the destruction of 1,791.9 U.S. tons of mustard agent has been reported to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons or OPCW, an intergovernmental organization whose goal is to eradicate chemical weapons worldwide.

“The United States is fully committed to destroying 100% of its remaining chemical weapons stockpile by Dec. 31, 2023,” said Mike Abaie, program executive officer, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives.

Under the close supervision of trained operators, the pilot plant uses advanced technologies to disassemble and drain the agent-filled munitions. The mustard agent is neutralized and the resulting product, known as hydrolysate, is broken down into salts, water and organics using living microbes.

The chemical weapons stockpile in Colorado has been protected and monitored by the Pueblo Chemical Depot since the early 1950s. Throughout the campaign, PCAPP personnel closely coordinated with the depot staff on the transportation of munitions.

“During the next several months at PCAPP, our technicians will retrofit the plant’s robots and systems to begin processing the next munitions campaign which are the 105mm projectiles,” said Levi.

## Pueblo Plant Completes First Munitions Destruction Campaign (continued)

In July, workers finished assembling three static detonation chamber, or SDC units, to augment PCAPP by destroying problematic munitions which are unsuitable for processing using the main plant's automated equipment. The SDC units will destroy the 4.2-inch mortar and overpack rounds, which is the third of three destruction campaigns.

Agent destruction operations in Colorado began in March 2015 and are scheduled to be completed by 2023. More than 780,000 munitions were in the original chemical weapons stockpile in Pueblo.

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A Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant ordnance technician uses a lift assist to transfer a 155mm projectile onto a conveyor belt prior to destruction in fall 2019. Conveyors transport munitions into Explosive Containment Rooms where energetics are removed from projectiles before the chemical agent contained within is drained and neutralized.