NEWS RELEASE

Pueblo Plant Begins Second Munitions Destruction Campaign

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For Immediate Release

The Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant, known as PCAPP, transitioned to its second campaign on Dec. 11 when Projectile Mortar Disassembly operations commenced with the start of destruction of the first 105mm mustard agent-filled projectiles stored at the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot.

"The start of the 105mm projectile destruction campaign is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of the men and women here," said Walton Levi, site project manager, PCAPP. "This workforce is committed to safely destroying the remaining U.S. chemical weapons stockpile in Colorado."

On Sept. 5, 2020, workers completed the destruction of nearly 300,000 155mm projectiles, marking the end of the main plant's first munitions campaign.

"Our team continues to fully support the Pueblo plant in protecting, storing and safely transporting the remaining chemical munitions in Colorado," said Col. Michael Cobb, depot commander. "With each pallet delivered for destruction, the risk to the workforce, community and environment is reduced."

Since the end of the plant's first campaign, technicians have retrofitted processing equipment to configure specialized components to destroy the smaller 105mm projectiles.

"The 155mm munitions destruction campaign was completed safely without a lost-time accident or incident," said Ken Harrawood, project manager, Bechtel Pueblo Team. "We are trained and ready to progress safely to the 105mm campaign."

As with the first campaign, neutralization followed by biotreatment will be used to destroy the mustard agent in the 105mm projectiles. Mustard agent molecules are neutralized with hot water and a caustic solution, resulting in hydrolysate, a common industrial chemical that is readily biodegradable. Hydrolysate is then broken down into salts, water and organics using living microbes.

To augment the main plant, three Static Detonation Chamber units, each consisting of two components — the detonation chamber and the off-gas treatment system — will destroy all problematic munitions, including the 4.2-inch mortar rounds, the third munition type stored at PCD. These units are expected to be operational in 2021.

"The team continues to follow strict protocols in compliance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to minimize the spread of COVID-19 while destroying the remaining stockpile," said Kim Jackson, plant manager, PCAPP.

Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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A Partnership for Safe Chemical Weapons Destruction

www.peoacwa.army.mil

The U.S. is destroying its remaining chemical weapons stockpile – mustard agent in Colorado and mustard and nerve agent in Kentucky – under a multinational arms agreement known as the Chemical Weapons Convention.

"The U.S. continues to honor our commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention as we begin safely destroying the last 105mm projectiles in the remaining U.S. chemical weapons stockpile," said Mr. Michael Abaie, program executive officer, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives.

Agent destruction operations in Colorado began in March 2015 and are scheduled to be completed by 2023.

For additional PCAPP information, contact the Pueblo Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office at (719) 546-0400 or pueblooutreach@iem.com. Visit www.peoacwa.army.mil for more information.

An ordnance technician uses a lift assist to transfer a 105mm projectile onto a pallet.