



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Baltimore District

# News Release

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## Army Corps of Engineers completes the destruction of chemical munitions at Spring Valley

**Baltimore** - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced today that it has completed the destruction of 15 World War I chemical munitions recovered from the Corps' investigation and cleanup of the Spring Valley formerly used defense site. All chemical and conventional munitions recovered from the site have now been destroyed.

Experts from the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency used a mobile system, the Explosive Destruction System, or EDS, to safely treat and neutralize the chemical agent fill suspected of being mustard agent in each of the 15 chemical munitions.

The EDS treatment process involves a number of steps to destroy the recovered chemical munitions one at a time. A commercial explosive is first placed on the recovered chemical munition, and then it is put inside the EDS's 50-gallon stainless steel containment vessel. The vessel is sealed, and the explosives are remotely detonated. This opens the outer casing of the munition.

Next, neutralizing chemicals are pumped into the containment vessel and are thoroughly mixed with the agent forming a much less toxic liquid. This liquid is then sampled to confirm the agent has been destroyed and finally pumped into waste drums for disposal at a permitted facility. A similar procedure is conducted with hot water to ensure the metal parts of the munition and the vessel are clean. Again, the water is sampled to ensure agent destruction and is pumped into waste drums for disposal at a permitted facility. Before the EDS door is opened, the air inside the containment vessel is sampled to confirm that it, too, is clean and free of agent. Finally, the door is opened and the remaining metal parts of what once was a chemical munition are containerized in a waste drum for disposal at a permitted facility.

This was the first time the EDS was used at the Spring Valley site. The EDS has been successfully used to destroy over 95 recovered chemical weapons across the country. The EDS will be transported off the Spring Valley site later this week.

Questions regarding the EDS and its operations should be directed to Louise Dyson, group leader, Product Manager for Non-Stockpile Chemical Materiel, 410-436-3445. Spring Valley project questions may be directed to the Baltimore District Public Affairs Office, 410-962-2809.