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U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

Enhanced On-site Container: Safe movement of chemical munitions

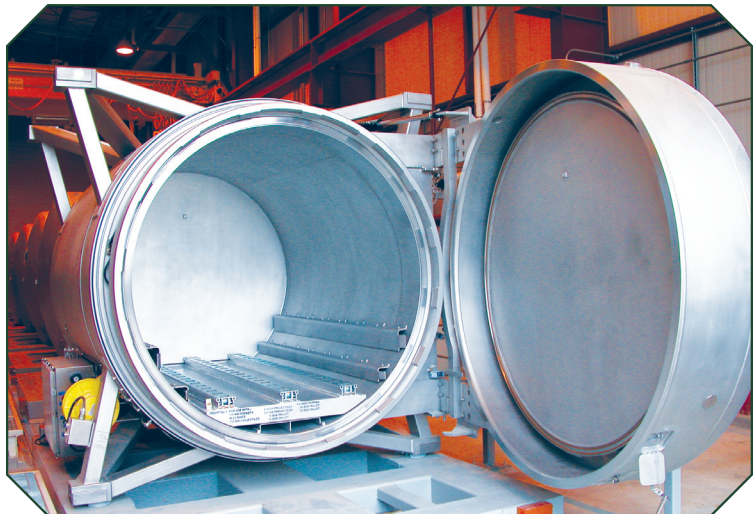
Safely storing and moving stockpiled chemical agent and munitions to a chemical agent disposal facility is an important component of the mission of the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA).

Specialized equipment is used to move agent and munitions in this first step of chemical weapons disposal. In the 1980s, the U.S. Army – in partnership with Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico – developed an on-site container known as an “ONC” to protect workers and the environment during chemical munitions movement from storage areas to disposal facilities. Extensive use of on-site containers at the Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility in Utah, led to a determination that a more efficient door closure system was needed. The Army and Sandia refined the container door closure system and created the second-generation enhanced on-site container, called an “EONC” for short.

Designed to resist impacts, punctures, crushing and fire, an EONC is a heavy, circular, tank-like receptacle. It is capable of holding up to thousands of pounds of chemical agent and munitions. Only one agent and munition type is moved at any given time.

EONCs also prevent release of chemical agent to the atmosphere in the unlikely event a munition should develop a leak during movement.

Safe movement of chemical agent and munitions from storage igloos to a disposal facility requires thorough attention to each step of the process. First, an EONC is brought to the storage area on



a flatbed truck. Then a forklift is used to remove pallets of munitions or a single bulk container of agent from the enhanced on-site container. Once loaded, the EONC is sealed and pulled by truck a short distance to the disposal facility container handling building, which is a receiving area for loaded EONCs. There it is inspected, monitored and inventoried before it is moved to the unpack area of the disposal facility where it is once again inspected and monitored before workers open and unpack the container. Monitoring includes carefully checking the EONC for any agent that might have been released during transit.

Once an EONC is unloaded in the unpack area, it is monitored once more to ensure it has not been contaminated. Then it is returned to service to eventually transport another load of chemical agent munitions to the disposal facility.

To learn more about CMA and its mission to safely store and dispose of chemical agents and munitions, please visit the Web site www.cma.army.mil or call (800) 488-0648.

For more information, contact the CMA Public Affairs Office at (410) 436-3629 (800) 488-0648