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Umatilla Chemical Depot celebrates end of operations

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By **Josh Peterson**. Published Thursday, March 15th, 2012

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The Umatilla Chemical Depot celebrates the end of an era tonight in Hermiston.

Hundreds of people filled the Hermiston Conference Center for a ceremony marking the depot's end of operations.

The depot and the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility recently completed the destruction of the entire chemical weapons stockpile - a process that began 50 years ago.

Those involved with the depot's operations say it's a huge relief to finish that work.



"It's been a long time coming. We talked about the first chemical munitions in 1962 to arrive at the depot, and then to now be out of the shadows of chemical weapons there that have been safely destroyed" said Lt. Col. Kris Perkins, Umatilla Chemical Depot.

All the work isn't completely finished at the depot.

Cleanup crews are now preparing to close the facility so other groups can use it.

That process is expected to be complete in 2014.

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