

Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility Operations Project Receives 2012 PMI® Project of the Year Award

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The Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility Operations Project, an initiative completed by engineering giant URS Corporation, has been honored by the Project Management Institute (PMI) as the winner of its prestigious PMI® Project of the Year Award. The award recognizes the accomplishments of a project team for superior performance, exemplary project management execution and innovation in project management processes.

Agility, risk management, communication and leadership are critical components of any high complexity project, especially when 7.4 million pounds of chemical agents are at stake. With the entire world watching, URS Corporation took on a project at the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (Hermiston, Oregon, USA) to help the United States Army-owned facility comply with the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty. This treaty, signed by 187 other countries, mandated that those countries with declared chemical weapons must have their stockpile destroyed by 29 April 2012.

“High stakes, high complexity and enormous risk made this project a unique challenge where success was non-negotiable,” said Mark A. Langley, president and CEO of Project Management Institute. “By leveraging strong project management practices, innovative ways to identify and mitigate risks and top-notch team-building expertise, URS Corporation conquered that challenge and safely completed a critical initiative that had worldwide implications. PMI commends URS and the entire project team for these results. We are honored to name them the 2012 Project of the Year Award winner.”

Because of the project’s complex environmental and regulatory requirements, a myriad of challenges loomed from start to finish. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency both had oversight of the project and the thousands of munitions marked for destruction. These munitions included rockets, mines and mortars ranging in size, shape and state of decay. In addition, there was a limited pool of experienced chemical weapons destruction workers from which to staff the project.

“Our biggest risk was that we had a new workforce that hadn’t handled chemical weapons before,” said Kim Jackson, plant operations manager at the facility. “It wasn’t just about learning the systems, but also teaching them how to operate the plant.”

Safety precautions were paramount. To mitigate the talent gap, project leaders hired personnel a year prior to the project’s launch in order to ensure sufficient training time. Experts who had developed specialized tools for similar initiatives at other disposal sites trained the new workers.

The team also simplified their process of incinerating each weapon, setting up mini-campaigns that segregated the chemical weapons and incinerated each in its own appropriate manner. Once each campaign was completed, the team retooled the work site and continued to the next one. The team also

ensured that air, water and soil quality surrounding the area was unchanged as a result of the chemical weapons destruction activities.

As a result of the project team's diligence, the project was completed in October 2011, six months ahead of the international treaty date. It came in millions of dollars under its US\$1.4 billion budget and with an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recordable injury rate of 0.46—a figure more commonly seen in industries like financial services, not in high-risk sectors like chemical management.

URS Corporation was presented with the 2012 PMI Project of the Year Award on Saturday, 20 October 2012 during the PMI Awards Ceremony at the PMI® Global Congress 2012—North America in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

About URS Corporation

Headquartered in San Francisco, CA, URS Corporation is a fully integrated engineering, construction and technical services organization with the capabilities to support every stage of the project life cycle. They offer program management; planning, design and engineering; systems engineering and technical assistance; information technology; construction and construction management; operations and maintenance; and decommissioning and closure services. With a network of offices in nearly 50 countries, they provide services to a broad range of clients, including U.S. federal government agencies, national governments of other countries, state and local government agencies in the United States and internationally, and private sector clients worldwide. Their work is focused in five key market sectors: Federal, Oil and Gas, Infrastructure, Power and Industrial. URS was ranked number two overall for The Top 500 Design Firms by ENR and number one overall for ENR's Top 100 Green Design Firms. Visit us at <http://www.urscorp.com/index.php>

About Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility

The Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) is located in Umatilla and Morrow Counties in Northeastern Oregon on the Umatilla Chemical Depot (UMCD). The UMCDF is a hazardous waste storage and treatment facility that utilizes four incinerators to destroy a stockpile of about 3,717 tons of chemical-warfare agents stored at the UMCD since 1962. The liquid chemical agents stored at the UMCD include nerve agents VX and GB and blister agent HD. More information can be found at: <http://www.umatilla-cmp.org/>

About Project Management Institute

PMI is the world's largest project management member association, representing more than 650,000 members and credential holders in more than 185 countries. As a global thought leader and knowledge resource, PMI advances the profession through its global standards and credentials, collaborative chapters and virtual communities and academic research. When organizations invest in project management, supported by PMI, executives have confidence that their important initiatives will deliver

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