



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
Date: April 28, 2023

Nearly 2,000 to Participate in May 3 Emergency Preparedness Exercise

PUEBLO, CO –The Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) annual exercise will be held Wednesday, May 3, 2023. The exercise is scheduled to start at approximately 9 a.m. and conclude in the early afternoon. This annual event has been designed to test participants' response capabilities to simulated emergencies, which are federally evaluated. This will be the community's final CSEPP exercise as the program winds down with the destruction of the chemical weapons at Pueblo Chemical Depot nearing an end.

Nearly 2,000 people from the American Red Cross, Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, First Student, local hospitals, Health Solutions, Pueblo School District 70, Pueblo School District 60, the Pueblo Chemical Depot, and more than a dozen first-response agency personnel from Pueblo County will participate.

The exercise scenario will involve a simulated chemical incident at the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot and another non-related emergency within Pueblo County, requiring the activation of various Emergency Operations Centers, the Pueblo Community Joint Information Center and decontamination and treatment facilities.

Two of Pueblo's public warning capabilities also will be tested during the exercise. The 22 outdoor warning sirens located in the emergency zones surrounding the Pueblo Chemical Depot will be tested as part of the exercise. A test message also may sound during the exercise for nearly 800 weather alert radios, which provide warning for people who are indoors.

The public may see exercise-related activity at several locations in Pueblo County. The responders may be dressed in full protective equipment and mock accident victims will receive realistic looking injury makeup called moulage. Emergency equipment and vehicles will be deployed to various sites to include the Pueblo Mall, Runyon Sports Complex and Colorado State University Pueblo.

There has been a lot of planning and preparing throughout the year by many local community and response agencies for this exercise, according to Pueblo County Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement & Emergency Services Bureau Chief Mark Mears and Pueblo Chemical Depot's Commander, Colonel Jason Lacroix.

“We look forward to testing our plans and procedures as we work together with our many community partners in coordinating the response to multiple incidents in our jurisdiction,” said Chief Mears.

“The annual CSEPP exercise is the culmination of the efforts and coordination between the Pueblo Chemical Depot and Pueblo County,” said Col. Jason Lacroix. “This exercise validates our support to state and local emergency response teams in the event of a chemical accident or incident on the depot that could impact the local community.”

For more information on CSEPP or the exercise, contact Michael Brock, Pueblo Chemical Depot, Office of Public Affairs at (719) 549-4335 or (719) 569-0693 or Gayle Perez, Pueblo County Sheriff’s Office Public Information Officer at (719) 583-6222 or (719) 924-5471.

###