

Kirtland AFB Streamlines Munitions Response Process

Posted At : June 28, 2007 6:40 AM | Posted By : Admin

Related Categories: UXO Cleanup

Thirty-three potential Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP) sites are located on Kirtland AFB over an area of approximately 15,812 acres. Access to most of these sites is controlled by physical factors (signage and inaccessibility), but even with these controls in place there has been occasional military and civilian exposure to UXO items located at the ground surface in the area. Because these sites are slated for future response actions under the MMRP, no attempts had been made previously to remove the UXO items.

During FY06, a Wide Area Assessment (WAA) was conducted at the Kirtland MMRP sites. A field reconnaissance carried out as part of the WAA required the assistance of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams when several UXO items were encountered.

Hazardous munitions items previously present at Kirtland AFB shown in the image below.



Subsequently, the Kirtland EOD team proposed to expand its initial efforts and remove other visible UXO items present within remote areas of Kirtland AFB. Although the typical responsibilities of a base EOD team do not include the cleanup of munitions response sites located on their base, the EOD team at Kirtland saw an opportunity to reduce potential exposure of installation personnel to these UXO items while providing needed training to the EOD teams. The removal effort, named the UXO Intervention and Recovery Project, would also reduce costs of any subsequent munitions responses conducted at the MMRP sites by eliminating the need to hire private contractors to remove the visible UXO items.

Execution of the project required close collaboration between the Kirtland AFB MMRP team, the EOD Flight, the Air Force Safety Center (AFSC), Air Force Materiel Command, and Headquarters USAF. The project was not designed to fully clear or remediate the areas and obtain the certificate of clearance required to release the land for public use, but to remove as many perceived munitions

hazards as practical in a two-week period with the limited funding allocated for the task.

The EOD team was able to successfully remove 1,065 munitions items totaling 12,611 pounds across 2,010 acres. Through the implementation of thorough Quality Assurance/Quality Control oversight during the demilitarization process, most materials could be recycled. The most successful aspect of the clean up, however, was the savings in time and cost for the Air Force, as AFSC was able to gain approval from the Department of Defense Explosive Safety Board (DDESB) to perform the surface clearance without having to submit an Explosive Safety Submission. With this approval from the DDESB, the total time from funding allocation to completion of field operations was less than two months, a time savings of at least six months. Additionally, the project was completed at a cost of approximately \$120,000, a cost savings of approximately \$480K over what would have been required if the Air Force had to conduct the same level of removal utilizing private contractors under its MMRP. Further, Kirtland AFB was able to support the Air Force mission by providing necessary training to the EOD Flight. This success at Kirtland AFB highlights the importance of innovative thinking and teamwork to streamlining results in the Air Force MMRP.

Munitions items recovered by Kirtland EOD personnel shown in the image below.



Article Submitted by: Mr. Wayne Bitner, Environmental Restoration Kirtland AFB, New Mexico.