



United States Navy

Redstone Arsenal

Military Corner

As part of the mobilization leading to U.S. involvement in World War II, Huntsville Arsenal was established in 1941 to create a second chemical weapons plant in addition to one in Edgewood, MD. The military installation was originally composed of three separate entities: the Huntsville Arsenal and the Huntsville Depot (later the Gulf Chemical Warfare Depot), which were operated under the auspices of the Chemical Warfare Service; and the Redstone Ordnance Plant, operated by the Army Ordnance Department. The name Redstone drew on the region's red rocks and soil.

In its early years, the arsenal produced and stockpiled chemical weapons such as phosgene, Lewisite, and mustard gas. The use of toxic gases in warfare was banned in 1925, but the U.S. signed with the reservation that it be allowed to use chemical weapons against aggressors who used them. The facility also produced carbonyl iron powder (for radio and radar tuning), tear gas, and smoke and incendiary devices. The arsenal also produced small pyrotechnic devices including small solid-fuel rockets during the war. In recognition of its production record, the arsenal received the Army-Navy "E" Award four times, the first on 31 October 1942. The ordnance plant was renamed Redstone Arsenal in 1943. Through the war years, more than 27,000,000 items of chemical munitions were produced and 45,200,000 ammunition shells were loaded. Redstone Army Airfield was established in 1943 for the 6th Army Air Force to test incendiary devices in preparation for the firebombing of Japanese cities.



Redstone Arsenal remains the center of testing, development, and doctrine for the Army's missile programs. Besides the U.S. Army Materiel Command and the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Life Cycle Management Command, Redstone houses the Tactical UAV Project Office, Redstone Test Center (RTC), the Missile Defense Agency, the Missile and Space Intelligence Center, and other operations.

The Ordnance Munitions and Maintenance School was moved to Fort Lee, Virginia. Redstone Arsenal continues to host the Marshall Space Flight Center, NASA's field center for propulsion analysis and development, which developed the Saturn rocket family in the 1960s and propulsion systems for the Space Shuttle in the 1970s and '80s.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redstone_Arsenal]

