

History of Dugway



U.S. Army Dugway Proving Ground (Dugway) was established as a result of U.S. entry into World War II. The U.S. realized that Japan, Germany, and Italy possessed chemical warfare capabilities. This generated the need for the U.S. to expand chemical and biological defense testing facilities. Headquarters for these activities were in Aberdeen, Maryland and that location offered little room for expansion.

The desert area in western Utah was selected as an ideal location for these activities because of the climate, altitude, and relatively isolated space, which could provide room for increased expansion. Most of Dugway's 798,855 acres came from the public domain, the Hatch Brothers, and the State of Utah.

The following is a summary of the history of Dugway and provides information about some of the activities that have occurred on site.

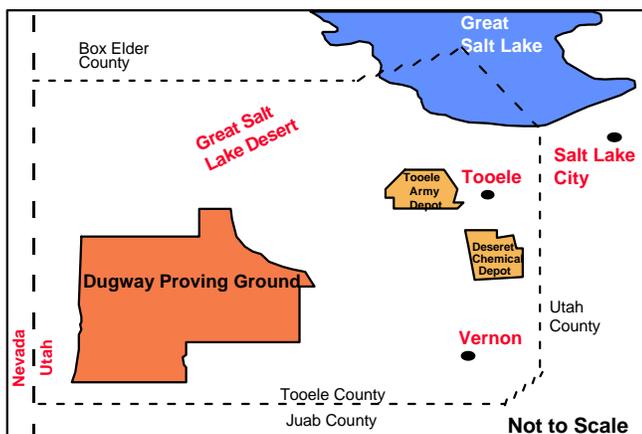
1942 - 1950

- ~ **February 6, 1942** - Franklin D. Roosevelt withdrew an initial 126,720 acres of Utah land from the public domain for use by the Department of Defense (DOD). Six days later, Dugway was established.
- ~ **Summer 1942** - Full scale testing operations commenced which included testing incendiary bombs, chemical weapons, mortars, and chemical agents. German and Japanese replica buildings were constructed as test targets for incendiary bombs and caves were dug into mountains to test the effects of chemical munitions, flame throwers, and various high explosives.
- ~ **1943** - Construction began on Michael Army Airfield.
- ~ **1945** - The Army established defensive biological warfare and testing facilities at Dugway.
- ~ **March 28, 1945** - Wendover Bombing Range was temporarily added to the installation, increasing the site by 405, 018 acres.



replica German buildings for munitions testing during World War II.

- ~ **Mid-1945** - Dugway converted four barracks and a lavatory building into 150-man prisoner-of-war barracks.
- ~ **August 1945** - With the end of World War II, the Army began to reduce activities at Dugway.
- ~ **January 16, 1947** - The Western Chemical Center was established which consisted of the Desert Chemical Depot and Dugway. The Dugway portion was placed on inactive status.
- ~ **June 29, 1950** - As a result of the Korean War, the Dugway portion of the Western Chemical Center was reactivated and work resumed on many activities which had been conducted during World War II. An additional 279,000 acres of land was acquired and new weapons were developed including flame throwers, smoke generators, and flame bombs.



In the past, Dugway and the Desert Chemical Depot were combined as part of the same facility.

History of Dugway Proving Ground Fact Sheet



1951 - 1970

- ~ **October 15, 1951** - Construction of a new administrative building and residential area began in English Village.
- ~ **June 25, 1953** - The Army's environmental test program was transferred to Dugway which included desert, tropic, and arctic test teams.
- ~ **July 31, 1953** - The Chemical Corps Meteorological Research and Development Program which conducts tests to determine the toxic quality and movements of the air was added to Dugway.
- ~ **1954-1968** - Testing operations continued and Dugway activities expand to include ecological systems surveys, radiation tests, off-base services, and a chemical-bacteriological-radiological orientation course. The ecological systems survey was a project of international interest and included biological inventories and study of animal diseases.
- ~ **1968** - Dugway and the Deseret Test Center combined and became known as the Deseret Test Center. Open air testing of chemical and biological agents was suspended and only simulants were used.

1962 aerial view of English Village.

1971 - 1989

- ~ **April 10, 1972** - The U.S. signed the treaty, the International Convention on the Prohibition of Development, Production, and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxic Weapons and their Destruction. This treaty is commonly known as the Biological Weapons Convention.
- ~ **June 1, 1973** - The Deseret Test Center was disestablished as a joint service activity and the command was returned to Dugway.
- ~ **1973-1982** - Chemical and biological research and testing at Dugway was decreased due to the BWC.
- ~ **1983** - Research evaluating smokes, obscurants, chemical, and biological defense was increased due to increased world sophistication in weapons.

Present

Dugway's present activities include chemical and biological defensive testing, environmental characterization and remediation technology testing, providing training facilities for troop training activities. In addition, Dugway is the Defense Department's leader in testing battlefield smokes and obscurants.



To submit comments and/or receive notices of meetings, fact sheets, brochures, or information relevant to the Programmatic Mission EIS, please contact:

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