

Russia Begins 'Final Stretch' of Chemical Weapons Disposal at Leonidovka

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The disposal of complex chemical weapons has started at the Leonidovka disposal facility in the Penza region, Interfax said Thursday.

Valery Kapashin, head of the government agency in charge of chemical munitions disposal, said that complex chemical weapons — the destruction of which he said marked the “home stretch” of the program to dispose of all chemical weapons — are especially difficult to dispose of because they consist of both poisonous toxins and explosives primed to go off if disturbed.

He said the startup work on the new line was tested in December. All testing at that time indicated that the new technology was highly efficient for the disposal of compound chemical munitions, as well as safe.

The Leonidovka facility stores about seven tons of toxic agents. Kapashin said in late 2012 that

the facility would operate for three years, meaning all weapons should be disposed of by 2015, in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention of 1997 signed by Russia, the U.S. and 186 other countries.

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