

Guide to the Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada (PEPCON) Records

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada
Title:	Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada (PEPCON) Records
ID:	MS-00004
Date [inclusive]:	1986-1989
Physical Description:	0.30 Cubic Feet
Physical Description:	0.42 Linear Feet
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada Records (1986-1989) are comprised of magazine articles, newspaper clippings, official reports, a profile of Jim Gibson, and a prospectus for a park named after Gibbons.

Preferred Citation

The Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada (PEPCON), 1986-1989. MS-00004. Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Historical Note

The Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada, built by Fred Gibson, Sr. and two partners, began operating in 1958. The plant produced ammonium perchlorate, an oxidizer used in National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) space shuttle and the defense industry's Titan missile programs. The plant was built just southeast of Las Vegas, Nevada near the city of Henderson, Nevada, where Gibson's son James (Jim) served as Mayor from 1997 to 2009. Inexpensive hydro-power from nearby Hoover Dam and the dry climate was ideal for handling and storage of the product.

On May 4, 1988, a series of explosions rattled the plant and surrounding area. Company officials estimated about 4,500 tons of ammonium perchlorate were in the plant at the time of the explosion. A nearby natural gas pipeline was ruptured by the explosions, which resulted in large flames that were visible for miles. Two employees were killed and more than 300 were injured.

After the explosion, the plant moved to Iron County in Southern Utah and was renamed Western Electrochemical Company.

Source: <http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/fire/Pages/PepconExplosion.aspx>

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Scope and Contents Note

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Administrative Information

Access Note

Collection is open for research.

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Processing Note

Records were processed in 2016 by Joyce Moore.

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Names and Subjects

- Engineering firms -- United States -- History
- Mineral industries
- Water rights

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Containers
"Impact Widening from Explosion of Nevada Rocket Oxidizer Plant," magazine article, 1988 August 8	box 01
"PEPCON Explosion," magazine article, 1988 October	box 01
Official records, 1988 November	box 01
"Thunder in the Valley," Las Vegas Sun, 1988 May-June	box 01
Annual Report, 1980	box 01
Letter from T. L. War, Executive Vice President of PEPCON to Joseph F. McDonald regarding production of ammonium perchlorate, 1959 February 3	box 01
"Facing the Next Challenger," Las Vegas Business Press, 1987 January 23	box 01
Gibson Industrial Park Prospectus, 1986	box 01
Jim Gibson profile, Las Vegas Review Journal, 1988 February 21	box 01
Newspaper clippings, 1988 May 5-1989 February 6	box 01