

Guide to the Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada (PEPCON) Disaster Collection of News Articles

This finding aid was created by Joyce Moore on September 18, 2017.

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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) Disaster Collection of News Articles
ID:	MS-00760
Date [inclusive]:	1988-1992
Physical Description:	1.15 Cubic Feet (3 boxes)
Physical Description:	1.04 Linear Feet
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada (PEPCON) Disaster Collection of News Articles (1988-1992) consists of articles from Las Vegas and other state and regional newspapers about the PEPCON plant explosion that took place in May of 1988. Also included are United Press International press releases from October to December, 1988.

Preferred Citation

Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada (PEPCON) Disaster Collection of News Articles, 1988-1992. MS-00760. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Historical Background

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

The Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada (PEPCON) Disaster Collection of News Articles (1988-1992) consists of articles from Las Vegas and other state and regional newspapers about the PEPCON plant explosion that took place in May of 1988. Also included are United Press International press releases from October to December, 1988.

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Arrangement

Collection is arranged alphabetically by Newspaper titles.

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Administrative Information

Access Note

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

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Acquisition Note

Accession number: 96-25.

Processing Note

Collection was processed in 2017 by Joyce Moore.

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Names and Subjects

- Environmentalism -- Nevada -- Las Vegas
- Newspapers -- Nevada -- Paradise Valley -- History

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Containers
Newspaper clippings, 1998-1992	
Las Vegas Sun, 1988 May	box 01
Las Vegas Sun, 1988 June-July	box 01
Los Angeles Times, 1988 May, 1991-1992	box 01
Las Vegas Sun, 1988 May-December, 1989 March-October	box 01
Reno Gazette, 1988 May	box 01
Review Journal (Las Vegas), 1988 May-1990 October Physical Description: 4 Files	box 02
Various Newspapers, 1988 May-December	box 03
Various Newspapers, 1988 May-June, 1990-1992	box 03
United Press International press releases, 1988 October-December	box 03