

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a CAIS?

DoD produced chemical Agent Identification Sets (CAIS), also known as war gas identification sets, between the 1930's and 1960's for use by the military to train military personnel (e.g., Soldiers) safely to identify, handle, and decontaminate chemical agents.



### What do CAIS look like?

CAIS consist of small quantities of various dilute chemical agents in glass vials and bottles that were packed in metal shipping containers or wooden boxes. Unlike most CAIS, two sets--CAIS K941, toxic gas set M-1; and CAIS K942, toxic gas set M-2/E11 contain a relatively large quantity of chemical agent (mustard). Because of the large quantity of mustard agent, DoD considers these two CAIS more hazardous than all other CAIS.

CAIS may appear to be brand new or old, rusted, and/or damaged. Depending upon the chemical agent involved and the environment (e.g., heat, sunlight, length of burial) a CAIS experienced, the color of the chemical agent can vary drastically



CAIS may be encountered in their original storage and shipping containers (metal containers or wooden boxes) or the CAIS glass vials and bottles may be found loose.

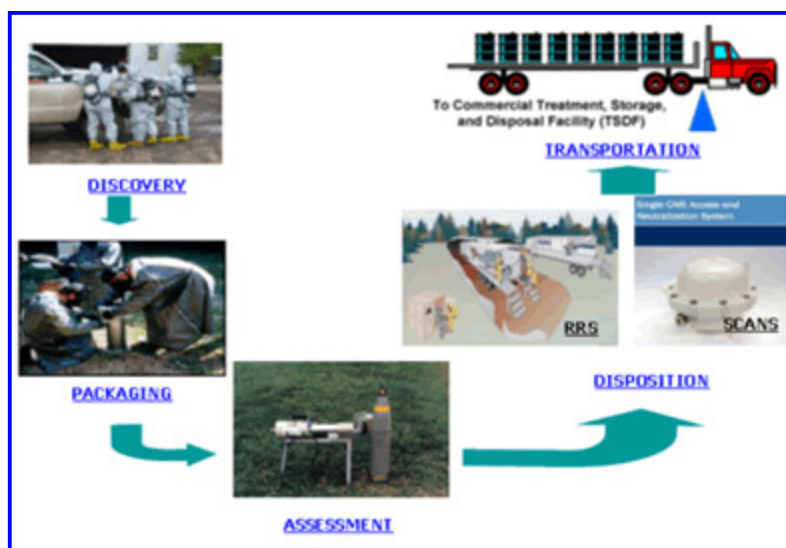
### What should I do if I find or think I have found a CAIS?

In the past (prior to the early-1970s), one of the approved procedures for disposing of CAIS was burial on training ranges or areas. When buried, CAIS were either buried in their original metal or wooden storage and shipping containers--called PIGS--or loose. Normally, CAIS vials were broken before burial and decontaminant was used to neutralize any chemical agent present.

If you discover or think you may have discovered a CAIS, either in a storage or shipping container, or loose vials or bottles, contact local law enforcement (call 911). Local law enforcement will contact military experts for assistance.

### What would DoD do with a CAIS?

- **Packaging** - Using personal protection equipment (e.g., protective clothing, equipment, rubber gloves), trained personnel seal the CAIS in plastic and place it in a sealed container. If a vial or bottle is broken and chemical agent was released to the soil, any chemical agent contaminate soil is removed, packaged, and properly disposed at a predetermined treatment storage disposal facility (TSDF).
- **Assessment** - Personnel (military or civilian) who are trained in the identification and handling of chemical agents will assess suspect CAIS. This assessment will both determine whether the suspect item is a CAIS and evaluate its condition. After assessment, response personnel determine the best method for disposal of the CAIS or unknown item.
- **Storage** - When necessary, CAIS may be packaged and stored on site until their final disposition can be arranged. When stored on site, CAIS are placed in an Interim Holding Facility (IHF). The IHF's location meets established safety criteria, and is approved by the Department of Defense Explosives Safety Board.
- **Disposition** - Currently, the Army destroys CAIS using specialized equipment. For individual vials, the Army uses the Single CAIS Access and Neutralization System SCANS. When a large quantity of CAIS are to be destroyed, the Army uses Rapid Response System (RRS). (For more information on these systems, see
- **Transportation** - CAIS transported over public highways are packaged and transported per Department of Transportation requirements. These requirements specify proper packaging, given the chemical agent and quantity present, and require the transport vehicle to be properly placarded (signs indicating the type of material present and the general hazard). If CAIS are destroyed on site, any secondary wastes are similarly packaged and transported to a TSDF for disposal.



"Click the image for a larger version."

#### It is important to know that CAIS:

- The chemical agent that CAIS may contain, even if solidified, can cause serious injury
- CAIS have been found on the surface and buried underground at active and former military installations, particularly areas used for training.
- CAIS should be considered dangerous and should not be touched.

Visit the [Photo Gallery](#) for pictures of different kinds of CAIS.