



PANTEX VISITOR CENTER

The importance of the Pantex Visitors Center cannot be measured by its modest dimensions. The Center is a trove of historical information about a facility that rivals the importance of the more famous Manhattan Project.

The Pantex Plant's evolving mission, facilities and technologies are represented in colorful exhibits that tell the story of the important work that helped America win the Cold War.

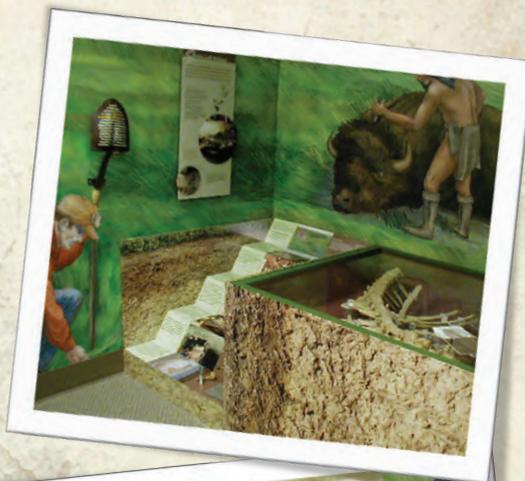
One fascinating display represents the known stockpiles of nuclear weapons in the world with tiny color-coded bombs. Starting with only a few blue bombs in 1946, U.S. weapons are joined by a handful of Soviet weapons in 1949. In 1986, massive blocks of red and blue dominate the display and then steadily decline to the dramatically lower numbers of today.

Each of the blue bombs that disappeared from the display represents a weapon that was dismantled at Pantex. The remaining blue weapons are maintained by Pantex.

One of the more striking artifacts in the Visitor Center is a piece of structural steel that was recovered from the World Trade Center. The steel reminds all that "Securing America" is a solemn and ongoing obligation. For more than 70 years, Pantexans have proudly done their part to fulfill this obligation.

Pantex Prehistory Archeological Site

- 7,100 acres survey for archeological sites
- 69 archeological sites recorded
- 12 Pre-World War II sites
- 57 prehistoric lithic scattered sites



A Pantex geologist discovered these old bones poking out of the earth in a small drainage channel on the plant grounds.

Monica Graham - Cultural Resources

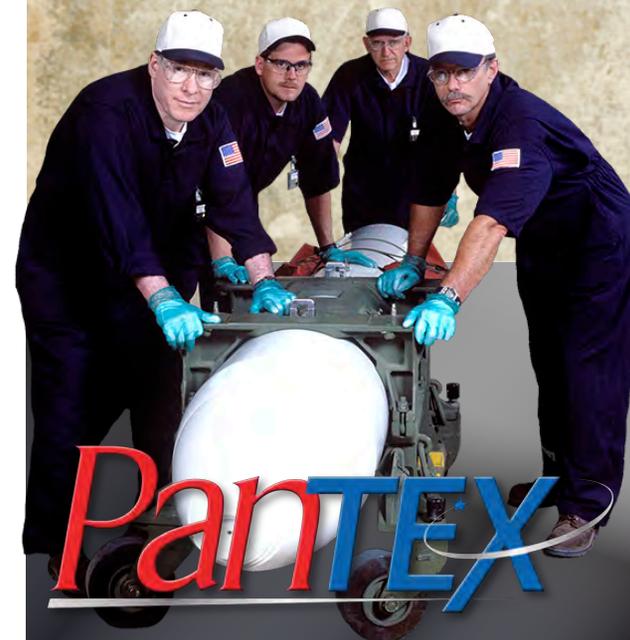
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A HERITAGE OF SERVICE TO OUR NATION



PanTEX



THE PANTEX STORY



1942 – Pantex Helps Win World War II

The desperate need for munitions to fight World War II led to the creation of the Pantex Ordnance Plant, with operations beginning on Sept. 17, 1942 on 16,000 acres of land east of Amarillo, Texas.



Pantex was the last of 14 ordnance plants constructed in Texas to support the war effort, producing nearly four million conventional bombs and artillery shells during three whirlwind years of heavy production.



The end of the War brought the end of production at Pantex, with the plant closing the day after the war ended. The land acquired to build Pantex was leased to Texas Technological College (now Texas Tech University) for \$1.

1951-1991 – Pantex Rebuilt for Cold War Era

The development of nuclear weapons that led to the end of the second World War also ushered in a new type of war – the Cold War. It was characterized by an arms race with nuclear weapons at the heart of the competition. The Pantex Plant played a key role in the Cold War, assembling thousands of nuclear warheads that helped maintain the détente between the Soviets and the West.

The federal government reacquired the land and facilities that made up the Pantex Plant in 1951 and undertook a building campaign to create a cornerstone of the nuclear weapons complex. The Pantex mission continued to grow over the decades as other facilities closed and responsibilities for modification, surveillance, assembly and high explosives operations were moved to the site. Since 1975, Pantex has been the nation's primary assembly, disassembly, retrofit and modification center for nuclear weapons.



The Present and Future of Pantex

The mission of the Pantex Plant promises to be an enduring one as dwindling worldwide stockpiles of nuclear weapons demand increased reliability to maintain the security of the United States through a credible nuclear deterrent.

Pantex continues its key role of ensuring the safety, security and reliability of the nation's nuclear stockpile: excess weapons are dismantled, surveillance is conducted on the stockpile and aging weapons are maintained through Life Extension Programs.

The critical and unique nature of work done at Pantex ensures that the site will continue to Secure America for decades to come.

