



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

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Persistent URL for this finding aid: <http://n2t.net/ark:/62930/f1101s>

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## Summary Information

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| <b>Repository:</b>               | University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.  |
| <b>Creator:</b>                  | Pacific Engineering and Production Company  |
| <b>Title:</b>                    | Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada (PEPCON) Disaster Collection of News Articles  |
| <b>ID:</b>                       | MS-00760  |
| <b>Date [inclusive]:</b>         | 1988-1992   |
| <b>Physical Description:</b>     | 1.15 Cubic Feet (3 boxes)   |
| <b>Physical Description:</b>     | 1.04 Linear Feet  |
| <b>Language of the Material:</b> | English   |
| <b>Abstract:</b>                 | 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

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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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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

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Collection is arranged alphabetically by Newspaper titles.

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## Administrative Information

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### 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

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

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## Collection Inventory

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| 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<br>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     |