

# Minuteman Missile

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Historic Site  
South Dakota



## “Ace In The Hole”

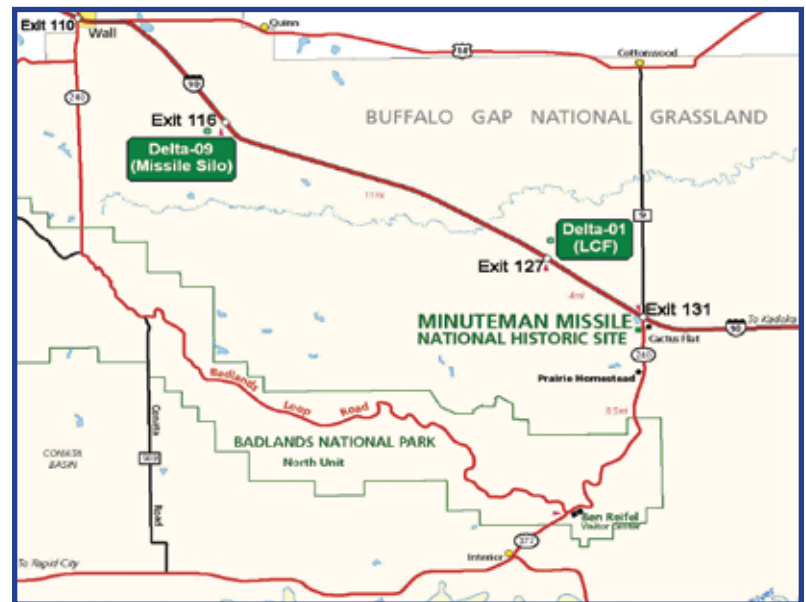
President Kennedy referring to Minuteman Missiles, 1962

Here you will find remnants of the Cold War, including an underground launch control center and a missile silo. Minuteman missiles held the power to destroy civilization as we know it. Yet the same destructive force acted as a deterrent which kept the peace for three decades. Minuteman Missile makes it possible to revisit a time when the threat of nuclear war haunted the world.

Due to innovative solid-fuel technology, the Minuteman was deployed in remote underground silos and could be launched by crews stationed at launch control centers miles away. Designed to travel over the North Pole and arrive at its target thirty minutes after the launch command was given, its 1.2 megaton warhead carried the explosive equivalent of over one million tons of dynamite.



NPS Photo



## You Have Questions – We Have the “Top Secret” Answers



NPS Photo

Because nuclear weapons sites were under tight security, most civilians developed their understanding of missiles from popular movies like “War Games” (1983) and “Dr. Strangelove Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb” (1964). As is often the case, the “Hollywood version” of life around missiles could be misleading and inaccurate. How much of the truth do you really know?

1. Were the missiles “top secret?”
2. Were the missiles launched by pressing a red button?
3. If a missileer did not execute a launch command would their partner shoot them?
4. Did the missileers know where the missiles were going?
5. How many missileers did it take to launch the missiles?
6. Were most missiles aimed at cities?

The answers to these questions cannot be found anywhere on this page. **The only place to find these answers** is at Minuteman Missile National Historic Site’s visitor contact station. It is now time for you to come visit Minuteman Missile and ask a ranger these questions and learn the real truth about nuclear missiles.

### How do I get to Minuteman Missile National Historic Site?

The Minuteman Missile Visitor Contact Station is a great starting point for tours to the site and where you can view the park film. It is located off Interstate 90, exit 131, beside the Badlands Trading Post (Conoco gas station). To get there from the Badlands National Park Visitor Center, take South Dakota Highway 240 8.5 miles north towards Interstate 90. Just before reaching the interstate you will see the Badlands Trading Post on the left. The Visitor Contact Station is adjacent to the trading post.

### What are the hours for the Minuteman Missile Visitor Contact Station?

The contact station is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday and closed on Sunday during the Summer season (Memorial Day - Labor Day). The rest of the year, the contact station is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m..

### Can we see the missile silo?

Launch Facility Delta-09 (the missile silo) is open from Monday through Saturday May 1st - October 31 from 8:00 - 4:00 p.m. with no reservations required. A ranger will be stationed on site intermittently to provide informal programs and answer questions. When a ranger is not at the silo, a self-guided cell phone tour is available to guide your visit to the launch facility (missile silo) Delta-09. Visitors can access up to ten tour stops via their own cell phone. These stops offer information about the silo structures and operations during the Cold War. Delta-09 is located on the south side of Interstate 90, exit 116. Turn south on to the county road and the silo is ½ mile on the right.

### What else can we see at Minuteman Missile?

Guided tours of the Delta-01 Launch Control Facility are available on a first come, first served basis Thursday through Tuesday, six days a week. This tour will include the opportunity to go into the underground Launch Control Center and learn how Minuteman nuclear missiles could have been launched during the Cold War.

Reservation tours are offered only on Wednesdays during this summer season and can be made one week in advance by calling 605-433-5552.

Tour space is limited to six persons.

Please note that all visitors wishing to view the launch control center must be Physically fit to climb two 14 foot ladders in an emergency.

No children under 40 inches tall or infants are allowed below.

## Got Kids? Get A Badge!

Come to the Minuteman Missile Visitor Contact Station to get a Junior Ranger Program. We have programs for kids 7-11 years of age and 12 and up! When they successfully complete the program, a National Park Service ranger will issue an official certificate and a Junior Missileer badge!