



NASA: Moon's south pole to be bombed on friday

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If everything goes as planned, NASA's Lunar CRater Observing and Sensing Satellite (LCROSS) mission will crash a rocket and a spacecraft into the Moon's south pole. The mission's objective is to determine whether or not there is water on the Moon.

According to [NASA](#), the Lunar CRater Observing and Sensing Satellite (LCROSS) mission is seeking to answer a lingering question: Is there water on the moon?

In 1999, NASA's Lunar Prospector detected

concentrated hydrogen signatures in the shadowed craters at the lunar poles. Questions about the existence of lunar water have persisted for a decade since the Lunar Prospector's mission.

On Oct. 9, the Centaur upper stage rocket is scheduled to separate from its shepherding spacecraft, the LCROSS, and will impact the lunar south pole with enough force to create a debris

Artist's rendering of the LCROSS spacecraft and Centaur separation.

NASA

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plume rising above the lunar surface.

The shepherding spacecraft will fly through the debris plume four minutes after the crash of the Centaur. The LCROSS is designed to collect data and relay it back to Earth before impacting the lunar surface and creating a second debris plume.

NASA reports that the payload of the LCROSS consists of a visible light spectrometer, two mid-infrared cameras, two near-infrared spectrometers, two near-infrared cameras, a visible camera and a visible radiometer.

According to NASA:

As the ejecta rises above the target crater's rim and is exposed to sunlight, any water-ice, hydrocarbons or organics will vaporize and break down into their basic components. These components primarily will be monitored by the visible and infrared spectrometers. The near-infrared and mid-infrared cameras will determine the total amount and distribution of water in the debris plume. The spacecraft's visible camera will track the impact location and the behavior of the debris plume while the visible radiometer will measure the flash created by the Centaur impact.

The mission is being overseen by NASA's Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, CA, and data will be analyzed by Ames missions scientists.

The projected impact on Oct. 9 is 4:30 a.m. PDT, and the debris plumes are expected to be visible from Earth for those using telescopes 10-to- 12 inches and larger.

Moreover, according to [ABC15 News](#), the explosion is expected to be aired live by NASA-TV and on www.nasa.gov/ntv.

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