

## **Recycling – Part of Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield’s Sustainability Commitment**

Are you familiar with the Command Recycling Policy? What is my part, you ask? Building an effective Recycling Program requires each of us to get involved, and the Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield (FS/HAAF) Command Recycling Policy Memorandum directs full participation by all Military Units, Civilian employees, tenant organizations/activities, contractors and anyone living and/or working at FS/HAAF. And the requirement to recycle is not limited to materials generated on FS/HAAF. Persons living off the Installation, to include Civilians and contractors, are encouraged and humbly solicited to separate recyclables from their waste at home. On your way to work or shopping, drop the recyclables (no trash) into one of the Blue Recycling Dumpsters. For the convenience of all our patrons, 24-hour recycling convenience centers are located on both Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield. On Fort Stewart, these centers are located in the Post Exchange parking lot and at the intersection of McFarland Avenue and Sigma Street. On Hunter Army Airfield, convenience centers are located in the Post Exchange parking lot and on MacArthur Circle.

The current success of the Recycling Program can be attributed to proactive efforts on the Installation to capture every possible part of the waste stream for reuse or recycling. FS/HAAF is making positive strides as environmental stewards and with the support of the entire community the environment will sustain itself well into the future. But news articles, handouts and assessments only reach a small portion of the population. Talk to your neighbors, family, and co-workers about recycling. Community participation has been outstanding, but we can do better! The amount of material diverted (removed) from trash has increased from approximately 12 percent in 2004, to nearly 70 percent in 2014. This surge in material being reused or recycled is the result of everyone believing in the recycling message and doing their part to make it happen.

To be the best, there has to be continual improvement and effective motivation, and there are plenty of reasons to recycle! First, it is the environmentally responsible thing to do, to reduce our waste, reuse products, and recycle materials to reduce our impact on the environment. It is also an Executive Order by the President for Federal Agencies to reduce solid waste disposal through the support of recycling programs and to attain a 50 percent diversion rate. While we achieved this goal in 2014, our focus now must be not simply to maintain, but to continue to improve.

Another great reason to give the recycling program your full support is to save a valuable resource – the landfill. Do you know where your waste goes? Do you know what happens to the trash in the brown dumpsters? If you don’t know the answers to these two questions, then you probably don’t know that Fort Stewart has three landfills, and by using them, we pay less money for solid waste disposal. We also keep from filling up local, off-post landfills used by our neighboring municipalities. Our Sanitary landfill takes the garbage from all brown dumpsters on post. The Non-Putrescible landfill only takes those wastes that will not become putrid, or rotten. The Non-Putrescible landfill is used for wood, concertina wire, and other items normally deemed to be construction and demolition debris. We also have a yard waste landfill. Hazardous waste, liquid wastes, lead acid batteries and radioactive wastes are prohibited from the landfills. Likewise, salvageable, recyclable materials such as serviceable pallets, scrap metals, white goods, or other excess property book items should be processed through the Installation Recycling Center or the Defense Logistics Agency – Disposition Services [formerly Defense Reutilization and Market Office (DRMO)].

Here’s why this is important! When these very important resources (landfills) have reached capacity, the Installation will have to increase funding to have its wastes shipped off site to private landfills in neighboring communities. The total cost, on average, for transportation and tipping fees (charge for unloading/dumping at a landfill) is \$71 per ton. To put that in perspective, for 2014, a total of 8,685 tons of waste was deposited in our Sanitary landfill. If not for our on-post landfill resource, it would have cost approximately \$617,000 to deposit this waste in an off-post landfill. In these tight economic times, where will these additional funds come from? We might be directed to cut back on some of the services we are accustomed to! And what about our neighbor? What impact does FS/HAAF using off-post landfills have on local municipalities as we collectively fill up those few landfills? The law of supply and demand would dictate increased tipping fees for everyone! So, we thank you for your efforts in providing a record year in reducing the amount of waste going to the landfill.

The Army's responsibility to ensure the Installation and all the activities that take place within it are in compliance with federal, state, and local environmental regulations. Through proactive management to prevent environmental impacts, a robust training program, comprehensive project review process, and a focus on sustainability, the Installation touts a record for success in compliance. But the success isn't possible without everyone doing their part. Whether you spend your time on FS/HAAF at the training range, in the office, residential community, shop, or motor-pool, each individual has a role to play in environmental compliance and sustainability. Remember the commitment to sustainability embodied in the FS/HAAF Sustainability Policy by knowing the ROCK acronym, where "R" is for Resources - prevent pollution and conserve natural resources; "O" is for Optimize - optimize the mission, well-being, and environment; "C" is for Complying with federal, state, and local laws; and "K" is for Keep improving, as we should all be striving to continually improve environmental stewardship.

Choices we make now will continue to have an impact for years to come. Every day, we are faced with decisions that have the potential to impact the environment, but recognizing those impacts can help us avoid them. By using measurable objectives and targets, we are forced to think about how not properly managing our resources can have negative impacts on the environment and readiness. How can we ensure that the environment and our resources are sustained for future generations? It doesn't happen overnight and it can't be done by any one individual. We all must work together each day to make the best possible choices that will lessen our impact on the world. For more information on environmental compliance programs or sustainability initiatives, please contact the DPW Environmental Division at 912-767-2010.

Don't forget about the Installation's sustainability objectives – conserving water and energy, reducing solid waste disposal through recycling, and land use through proper management of threatened and endangered species. And please remember our Sustainability Policy, R-O-C-K!

<b>R</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	 
<b>O</b>	<b>OPTIMIZE</b>	
<b>C</b>	<b>COMPLIANCE</b>	
<b>K</b>	<b>KEEP IMPROVING</b>	
<b>OF THE MARNE</b>	<i>Sustainable FS/HAAF</i>	