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NCBC's global reach, local action in support of Earth Day 2018

By BU2 Susan Johnston

NCBC Public Affairs

Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC), Gulfport will observe Earth Day, April 22, through various events and activities that demonstrate good environmental stewardship among Sailors and civilian personnel.

It is no secret that there have been major changes seen around NCBC Gulfport. These changes show the installations' efforts in making a global impact towards a cleaner environment and less destructive imprint not only on Earth Day, but every day throughout the year.

NCBC Public Works Department (PWD) personnel have put the spotlight on a few efforts NCBC has made in the last year towards a greener Earth including the four-megawatt solar field, the approximate 90,000 lower-wattage LED florescent light bulbs that have been replaced and the new recycling contract.

These efforts have resulted in the installation receiving the Small Shore Secretary of the Navy Energy Conservation Award twice within the last three years.

The solar farm has been up and running since June 2017. Mississippi Power owns the farm, however there are two sets of roof top solar panels that belong to the Navy and the energy obtained from them is directly used on base.

"The roof top panels do slow down the electric meter and shows a small improvement on energy conservation," said PWD Production Division Director, Matt Schultz. "In the Navy's effort to reduce the amount of energy obtained from power plants, even the amount



The 4 Megawatt solar facility on NCBC. This solar field is a partnership with Mississippi Power. (U.S. Navy photo)

of solar panels in the large solar farm would only absorb enough power for about half the base."

Every street light, parking lot light and outside building light has been replaced with an energy efficient LED bulb. It may not be obvious to the everyday patrons, but the amount of exterior lighting on base is significant. With thousands of bulbs replaced, Schultz stated it has made a noteworthy difference.

"It would be difficult to find an exterior lightbulb that has not been replaced with an LED," said Schultz. "The commissary alone has had a 90 percent reduction in wattage usage and many interior florescent lights have been and continue to be changed out as well."

While NCBC had its own recycling

program in the past, all of the operating facilities recycling are now being contracted out. This has greatly increased the amount of materials being recycled.

"Many new blue containers have been put in place for easy visibility next to garbage dumpsters," said PWD Facility Support Contract Manager, Grady Hood. "This encourages the decision to and has increased the amount recycled from 2.9 to 14.24 percent."

With many units of Civil Engineer Support Equipment (CESE) used on base, there are parts that must also be recycled.

"Last year we recycled about 55,000 pounds of used oil and 75,000 pounds of used tires," explained NCBC Installation Environmental Program Director, Lisa Noble. "Many batteries have

also been recycled as most CESE require the use of two batteries to operate."

As Earth Day is celebrated throughout the base, even the children at the Child Development Center (CDC) and Youth Center are doing multiple activities to learn their part in helping preserve the environment. The staff members will take part in educating and getting the children involved in activities such as planting flowers and vegetables, turning trash into treasures and cleaning up the beach near Jones Park. The Liberty Center is hosting a mini windowsill garden activity for those who live in the barracks to have the opportunity to place a potted plant in their windowsill.



LEFT: One of the many recycling receptacles found around NCBC. RIGHT: Naval leadership and Mississippi power worked together to ensure the opening of a 4 megawatt solar field. This solar field is the largest of its kind currently on a Navy base in the Southeast.