



NEWS RELEASE

Defense Commissary Agency

Office of Corporate Communications
1300 E Avenue □ Fort Lee, VA 23801-1800

Tel: (804) 734-8000, Ext. 4-8524 DSN: 687-8000, Ext. 4-8524

FAX: (804) 734-8248 DSN: 687-8248

www.commissaries.com

Release Number: 14-09
Date: February 5, 2009
Contact: Rick Brink, DeCA East public affairs officer
Tel.: (804) 734-8000, Ext. 4-8409
E-mail: richard.brink@deca.mil

Interim commissary to serve New Orleans area

By Rick Brink

DeCA East public affairs officer

FORT LEE, Va. – The Defense Commissary Agency plans to operate an interim commissary at Naval Support Activity New Orleans (Algiers) until construction is completed on a new joint commissary and Navy exchange facility at the nearby Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans (Belle Chasse).

“It took a concerted effort by installation, Navy, DeCA and NEXCOM leadership to develop this interim commissary, and because of it we’ll be able to continue to provide the commissary benefit until a new commissary is opened – a span of about 18 months,” said DeCA Director and Chief Executive Officer Philip E. Sakowitz Jr. “Military service members value the commissary benefit too much to allow the area to be without a commissary for that long, so it’s simply fantastic that we were able to work this out.”

The interim store is scheduled to open March 31 at a location just a couple blocks from the existing commissary. It will occupy part of the retail area used by the Navy exchange in building H-100. The existing facility, which will close permanently at 3 p.m., March 22, must be vacated to make way for a Marine Corps construction project.

The interim store will be smaller than the existing commissary, which averages more than 14,000 customers monthly. Customers will find practically the same items to buy, but the store will not have a deli or self-checkouts.

“Our interim store will have the same types of products with a selection limited to accommodate the store size. By that I mean a brand of ketchup might be offered in a 22-ounce

size instead of three sizes as a way to keep our product assortment consistent. We'll continue to work with customers if special orders are needed," said Christine Spain, store director.

Construction on the new commissary at NAS JRB New Orleans is expected to be completed by summer 2010. Collocated with a new 60,000-square-foot exchange, the new commissary will be 50,000 square feet and will include a deli-bakery and self-checkouts.

"We're excited about the challenges ahead of us," Spain said. "In keeping with our agency slogan, our goal is to make the interim commissary worth the trip for our customers as well as our employees during the next 18 months or so until we can all enjoy our new store."

- DeCA-

About DeCA: *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth about \$3,400 annually for a family of four. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America's military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.*