



NEWS RELEASE

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DeCA honors its best stores for recycling

By DeCA Office of Communication

NORFOLK, Va. – Helping the environment has become a habit for a number of stores in the Defense Commissary Agency. The agency formally acknowledged these commissaries for their excellence in recycling May 25 as part of DeCA’s Solid Waste Management Awards.

The awards were developed to recognize stores for exceptional work in reducing or eliminating the waste generated from everyday commissary operations. The environmental recognition was part of several commissary awards – ranging in areas from best commissaries to merchandising to outreach – given to DeCA employees during the weeklong 2011 Conference and Training Event.

Store directors of the winning commissaries were on hand to accept the awards from DeCA Director and CEO Joseph H. Jeu.

“As we endeavor to deliver an efficient and effective commissary benefit, we have an obligation to lessen our carbon footprint in the process,” Jeu said. “The employees at the stores we honor today have accepted that challenge and are leading the way in managing waste and conserving resources.”

The winning stores and region by category are:

- **Best Overall Store** – Fort Lewis Commissary, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. (zero waste)
- **DeCA Europe Best Overall Solid Waste Capacity Reduction** – Kelley Barracks Commissary, Garmisch Commissary and U.S. Army Garrison Baumholder Commissary in Germany; and Livorno (Camp Darby) Commissary, Italy.

- **Outstanding Effort Award** – Beale Air Force Base Commissary, Calif., and Naval Air Station Jacksonville Commissary, Fla.
- **Best Overall Recycling** – Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay Commissary, Ga.
- **Outstanding Performance in Cardboard Recycling Efficiency** – Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany Commissary, Ga.; Picatinny Arsenal Commissary, N.J.; Navy Supply Corps School Athens Commissary, Ga.; Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune Commissary, N.C.; Fort Benning Commissary, Ga.; Fort Jackson Commissary, S.C.; Fort Knox Commissary, Ky.; Fort Lee Commissary, Va.; Fort McPherson Commissary, Ga.; Grand Forks Air Force Base Commissary, N.D.; Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay Commissary, Ga.; Moody Air Force Base Commissary, Ga.; Norfolk Naval Shipyard Portsmouth Commissary, Va.; Tobyhanna Army Depot Commissary, Pa.; Tyndall Air Force Base Commissary, Fla.; and Vandenberg Air Force Base Commissary, Calif.

The Best Overall Store Award recognized the **Fort Lewis Commissary** for doing the most to move toward DeCA’s goal of zero waste going to landfills. The criteria for this award includes a store’s solid waste capacity reduction, recycling for cardboard, plastic and office paper over the last three fiscal years.

“Fort Lewis has increased the type of materials it recycles – leading to their current recycle rate of 76 percent,” said Mark Leeper, an environmental engineer who directs the agency’s recycling mission. “They’ve reduced the number of their waste containers and the times per week these containers were being dumped. But the employees there took recycling even further by composting their produce trimmings, fats and bones. They also participate in the installation’s recycling initiative.”

For the DeCA Europe Best Overall Solid Waste Capacity Reduction Award, the four recipients – **Kelley Barracks, Garmish, Baumholder** and **Livorno** – achieved their honors based on the greatest reduction of their waste container capacity.

The commissaries at **Beale Air Force Base** and the **Naval Air Station Jacksonville** earned the Outstanding Effort Award thanks to demonstrated actions to improve recycling at their stores. At Beale, they did not have a plastic recycling contract but identified sufficient space behind their store to hold plastic bales until they had a trailer load. Then they contacted DeCA contracting, and the agency processed a spot bid to sell the material. At Jacksonville, the commissary set a DeCA record by making the agency’s largest plastic recycling bale – 1,539.25 pounds of plastic.

The Best Overall Recycling Award went to **Kings Bay** thanks to the store's consistent improvement in cardboard efficiency and its ability to come the closest to meeting its plastic recycling goal over the last three fiscal years.

The 16 commissaries honored for the Outstanding Performance in Cardboard Recycling Efficiency Award were recognized for exceeding the agency's goal of 55 percent efficiency in cardboard recycling. After a recycling study of 22 stores, it was determined that for every \$1 million of sales, a store would generate 27.66 tons of cardboard if recycled at 100 percent efficiency. Fifty-five percent of that is 15.2 tons per \$1million of sales.

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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 amounting to thousands of dollars annually. For current savings figures for various groups – single member up to a family of seven – visit <http://www.commissaries.com>. 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.*