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Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Environmental advisers to help

BY CATHY HAMILTON-WISSMER

Directorate of Public Works

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The Pacific Northwest is a place of immense beauty, abundant natural resources and endless opportunities for outdoor activities.

Like the surrounding communities, Joint Base Lewis-McChord strives to create a safe and healthy place to work and live.

JBLM's Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division helps with this by providing units the resources to enhance efficiency and mission readiness through the proper management of resources.

Each organization on JBLM must comply with various legal, regulatory and policy requirements by proper management of their environmental program.

This part of the mission is supported by the environmental division through the Installation Environmental Management System, Environmental Operating Permits and Environmental advisers.

There are four environmental advisers on the installation, and they're here to provide guidance on the procedures to issue, store and properly manage hazardous materials.

A unit's environmental adviser provides information regarding shelf-life management, extension labels training, as well as other environmental training.

They can do a walk-through of a unit's area and give suggestions on how to stay in compliance with current environmental regulations.

Environmental advisers are here to help units avoid notices of violation, fines, liabilities, increased regulatory scrutiny, and in severe cases, the loss of opportunity to use training areas.

The advisers are available to address concerns and aid in finding solutions to issues that may have arisen during an annual Environmental Compliance Assessment Team inspection.

The combined improper management of hazardous materials costs JBLM and units an average of \$1.5 million annually.

This cost is incurred as units pay for materials but never utilize it for its intended purpose and then have to pay to dispose of and replace the material.

Further costs come in the form of fines by the State Department of Ecology and/or the Environmental Protection Agency (Federal) at "\$10,000 per day depending on the violation," said Corey Gauny, an environmental adviser. "The environmental program belongs to the unit commander. Commanders delegate responsibility through appointment orders and the Environmental Operating Permit and identify roles to include the Environmental Officer for your unit.

"I tell the units: Your commander has put you in a position to manage the hazardous materials and hazardous waste. The environmental officer is the manager, environmental advisers are the specialists and resource to aid you."

In the spring of 2016, the commander of Army Environmental Command visited JBLM and handed out coins to several service members for the outstanding management of their units' environmental programs.

More information

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Corey Gauny

Environmental adviser, JBLM Department of Public Works Environmental Division

“Too often, the environmental program can be seen as a competing priority,” Gauny said. “The perception is that units focus on readiness or compliance. The truth is that proper supply chain management is not just a readiness issue for units, it is also an environmental concern. Proper management of hazardous materials supports mission sustainability.”

Environmental management is taken seriously on JBLM, recognizing the Army’s Triple Bottom Line Plus of sustainability: mission, environment, community and economic benefit.

Putting your environmental program in the continuity book is a big piece to a successful unit program. Units can ask for help by calling 253-967-4786.

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