



Clean Air

Fairchild Air Force Base recognized for exemplary air quality programs

Fairchild Air Force Base has been named recipient of the 2004 Clean Air Award for their ongoing commitment to reduce air emissions, announced the Spokane County Air Pollution Control Authority.

“Fairchild’s facility-wide commitment to reduce air emissions and embrace technology benefits us all by helping to clean up the air we breathe,” Eric Skelton, SCAPCA Director.

A decision in 2002 to replace their 58-year old central steam plant resulted in an 85% reduction--or approximately 55 tons--of air pollutants. The central steam plant was replaced with 104 high-efficient, natural gas-fired heating units, which are dispersed throughout the base.

“The Air Force, as an organization, genuinely embraces the role as an environmental leader and strives to be an outstanding steward of the resources we have been provided,” said Lieutenant Colonel Sal Nodjomian, 92nd Civil Engineer Squadron Commander.

The base is a leader in using new technologies, most recently in the area of alternative fuels. Earlier this year, Fairchild began using biodiesel fuel as soon as it became available. The base uses B20 fuel, which is a mix of 20% biodiesel and 80% regular diesel. In less than three months, over 13,500 gallons of B20 have been used in base vehicles, reducing the amount of carbon monoxide, particulate matter and other pollutants emitted into the air.

Before biodiesel, FAFB began purchasing vehicles that would operate on E85, which is a mixture of 85% ethanol and 15% unleaded gasoline. When used in motor vehicles,



E85 produces much less carbon monoxide pollution than cars that operate on unleaded gasoline. Fairchild’s initial goal is a 20% reduction in annual petroleum consumption by their fleet vehicles.

Kristin Nester is an Environmental Engineer at Fairchild AFB, where she also serves as the Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC). As ETC, Kristin implements Fairchild’s award-winning Commute Trip Reduction program. Since the program began in 1992, the base has eliminated over 44,000 miles driven by solo drivers each week, which equates to over 50 tons of pollutants annually.

“The overall benefits, both tangible and non-tangible, go far beyond simple dollars and cents. Our composite environmental efforts directly improve the quality of life for all members of Team Fairchild well as our surrounding communities. Everything from the use of safer chemicals in the workplace to more reliable and efficient heat to less stressful commuting all benefit our health and the environment we share,” said Lt. Col. Nodjomian.

“The Clean Air Award is given to publicly express our appreciation for innovation and to encourage others to follow suit,” said Skelton.

Congratulations to Fairchild Air Force Base, the 2004 Clean Air Award recipient for your hard work and dedication to improve air quality!

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