



Sheppard Senator



Combat Capability Starts Here

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Sheppard recognized by EPA for conservation

By John Ingle
Editor

When the 80th Flying Training Wing switched chemicals used in the painting process of aircraft, the goal was to use a more environmentally friendly product.

Little did they know it would set the stage for Sheppard to become the first Air Force installation invited by the Environmental Protection Agency to become a partner in the Waste Minimization Program.

Sheppard, led by the 82nd Civil Engineer Squadron's environmental flight, officially became a partner Sept. 17.

"It was an unexpected invitation," Mark McBurnett, 82nd CES environ-

mental flight chief said. "We implemented the switchover to reduce our employees exposure to hexavalent chromium and decrease our water sampling requirements."

The "switchover" in the painting process was from an acid/alodine chemical to the environmentally friendly PreKote™. The chemical acid/alodine was costly in both price and disposal fees.

Lear Sigler Inc. personnel began using PreKote™ in July to adhere help primer and paint adhere to aircraft as well as prevent metal corrosion.

Mr. McBurnett said the change wasn't accomplished by Sheppard alone.

"The EPA, the Texas Regional

See EPA, Page 4

EPA

Continued from Page 1

Environmental Office, and the Air Force Specials Program Office was involved in our decision to switch to PreKote™," Mr. McBurnett said.

Following a base visit by a high-level EPA official, Mr. McBurnett said the government agency established a precedence that said PreKote™ is as a "suitable substitute for acid/alodine."

Kathy Aisling, a senior environmental engineer with the EPA's Region 6 office in Dallas, Texas, said Sheppard is only the fourth partner in the region since the program began about one year ago. There are about 25 companies nationwide in the program.

"Not only is Sheppard the first military base to join in our region, they're the first Air

Force base in the country to join in the country," she said.

Most of the companies in the program are oil or chemical producers, Ms. Aisling said.

Mr. McBurnett said he could anticipate other bases in Air Education and Training Command and the Air Force joining the program as a way to better protect the environment. He added that several AETC bases are looking to switch over to PreKote™ instead of the more hazardous and costly materials currently used now.

Ms. Aisling visited Sheppard Feb. 3 and presented Brig. Gen. Arthur Rooney Jr., 82nd Training Wing commander and Col. H. D. Pumbo, 80th FTW commander, with the EPA Waste Minimization Partnership plaque.



Photo by 2nd Lt. Brooke Brander

The Environmental Protection Agency recently presented the Sheppard with a plaque that recognized their partnership in the Waste Minimization Program. Sheppard is the first military installation to become a partner.



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