

## PreKoting the environment

**By 2nd Lt. Brooke Brander**  
*Base public communication*

The 80th Flying Training Wing has taken a more environmentally friendly approach to refinishing aircraft with the use of PreKote™, a Pantheon Chemicals product.

Sheppard recently switched from acid/alodine to PreKote™, changing from a chemical process to a mechanical process. PreKote™ is a three-step process that is applied to the plane after the paint has been stripped and before the primer is applied.

PreKote™ is a metal treatment that ensures the primer and paint adhere to the plane as well as prevents metal corrosion on the plane.

Acid/alodine, which contains the heavy metal hexavalent chromium, was used in the past by the 80th FTW to treat the T-37 and T-38 aircraft.

Mr. Jake Jacobson, Lear Siegler Industries environmental, safety and health supervisor, said acid/alodine accrued large costs in hazardous disposal fees and had to be handled carefully by corrosion special-

ists who applied the chemical.

Mr. Mark McBurnett of the 82nd Civil Engineer Squadron environmental flight said the new treatment would be safer for workers.

"Sheppard's switch to PreKote™ has streamlined the painting process and reduced our regulatory oversight," he said. "The workers no longer have to handle acid, hexavalent chromium, or alcohol and we've replaced them with safer products."

Mr. Jacobson said the benefits from switching from acid alodine to PreKote™ include: a more environmentally friendly product; a drastic reduction in final waste cost of approximately \$14,500 per quarter; reduced product and application cost; and an all around safer product with human exposure concerns cut drastically.

A Sheppard master sergeant said the treatment is another example of the Air Force looking for ways to create a safe workplace for employees.

"Anything we can bring into the maintenance environment that is going to benefit the safe-



Photo by 2nd Lt. Brooke Brander

**Dong Nguyen, a corrosion specialist for Lear Siegler Industries, applies the first of three applications of PreKote™ to a T-38 Talon during a demonstration for Tinker Air Force Base. Sheppard and LSI recently made the move to the newer chemical to ensure primer and paint adhere to the surface better while protecting the environment at the same time.**

ty of the employees, the environment and also has cost savings is tremendous," Senior Master Sgt. David Nelson, 80th FTW aircraft maintenance superintendent, said. "The Air Force is always looking for ways to do that."

Members of Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. visited the 80th FTW June 17 to observe the application of PreKote™ to a T-38.

Mr. McBurnett said the team from Tinker was here to learn more about the PreKote™

application process for possible use on their AWACs, KC-135s and occasional B-52s.

Sheppard is the second Air Education and Training Command base to switch to PreKote, following Columbus Air Force Base, Miss.



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