

## VA ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS PROGRAM

**1. REASON FOR ISSUE.** To update Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy on implementing an effective environmental awards program and to be consistent with changes made to the White House's "Closing the Circle" Awards Program, the Federal Government's top environmental awards program.

**2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES.** This directive changes the name of VA Directive 0053 from "Acquisition, Recycling, and Waste Prevention Awards Program" to "VA Environmental Excellence Awards Program;" updates specific policy and responsibilities for implementing the VA Environmental Excellence Awards Program; and provides information regarding:

- a. Eligibility Criteria
- b. Nomination Criteria
- c. Evaluation Criteria and Process
- d. Recognition Mechanism
- e. Listing of Awards Categories

**3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE.** The Office of Acquisition and Materiel Management (OA&MM), Office of the Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program Management and Operations (049M).

**4. RELATED HANDBOOK.** VA Handbook 0053, VA Environmental Excellence Awards Program.

**5. RESCISSIONS.** This directive rescinds VA Directive 0053, Acquisition, Recycling, and Waste Prevention Awards Program, dated June 6, 1996.

**CERTIFIED BY:**

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY  
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

/s/  
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### 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

a. This directive is being updated to reflect the requirements for Federal agencies to develop internal awards programs to reward their most innovative programs that implement the objectives of Executive Orders 13101, Greening the Government Through Waste Prevention, Recycling, and Federal Acquisition, and 13148, Greening the Government Through Leadership in Environmental Management. Additionally, it is being revised to be consistent with changes made to the White House's "Closing the Circle" Awards Program, the Federal Government's top environmental awards program.

b. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to waste/pollution prevention; recycling; purchasing recycled content, biobased, energy efficient, and other environmentally preferable products; and conserving natural resources. The intent of this program is to stimulate activity in these areas and to recognize VA employees and facilities whose efforts have led to an improved environment.

### 2. POLICY

a. Policies and procedures set forth in this directive and accompanying handbook will be adhered to in submitting and evaluating nominations for the VA Environmental Excellence Awards Program.

b. Nominations will be submitted to the Office of the Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program Management and Operations (049M) for review and coordination with the VA Environmental Council. The final selection of the award winners and honorable mentions will be made by the VA Environmental Executive.

c. A winner may be selected in each of the VA Environmental Excellence Awards Program categories. One or more honorable mentions may also be selected in each of those categories.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. The Assistant Secretary for Management (004) is the VA Environmental Executive and will be responsible for:

(1) Administering the VA Environmental Excellence Awards Program.

(2) Issuing the annual call for nominations, providing information concerning any changes to the awards categories or evaluation criteria, and amplifying guidance as necessary.

(3) Ensuring that a subcommittee of the VA Environmental Council is convened to review the nominations.

(4) Making the final selection of the award winners and honorable mentions.

b. The Office of Acquisition and Materiel Management (OA&MM), Office of the Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program Management and Operations (049M), will:

(1) Coordinate the collection and review of the nomination submittals for evaluation by the VA Environmental Council.

(2) Ensure that the selected award winners and honorable mentions are recognized in a timely manner and that appropriate awards are presented and publicized.

(3) Ensure that the winners of the VA Environmental Excellence Award are nominated for the White House's "Closing the Circle" Awards Program.

c. Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials may develop and implement a mechanism for evaluation of facility and individual nominations for submission for the VA Environmental Excellence Awards Program. In the absence of other mechanisms, facility directors will develop an evaluation methodology for selecting nominations to be forwarded to the Office of the Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program Management and Operations (049M).

#### **4. REFERENCES**

a. Executive Order 13101, Greening the Government Through Waste Prevention, Recycling, and Federal Acquisition (September 14, 1998).

b. Executive Order 13148, Greening the Government Through Leadership in Environmental Management (April 21, 2000).

c. Executive Order 13149, Greening the Government Through Federal Fleet and Transportation Efficiency (April 21, 2000).