



United States Coast Guard  
Seventeenth District

Semper Paratus



KODIAK, Alaska – Chief Warrant Officer Steve Allbee, Integrated Support Command Kodiak recycling program director, stands in a pile of recyclables delivered to the local recycling station from Coast Guard ISC Kodiak. ISC Kodiak was recognized on July 7 with the 2007 Department of Homeland Security Environmental Achievement Award for its recycling program. The program diverted more than half a million pounds of materials from local landfills in 2006. (Official U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Richard Brahm.)

## Coast Guard Talks Trash

by PA3 Richard Brahm

Each day the Coast Guard protects the marine environment from threats ranging from pollution to illegal fishing. While marine protection operations are vigilantly underway along America's coasts and waterways, the Coast Guard has also taken on the challenge of reducing the impact it has on the environment from its day to day operations.

This effort can be clearly recognized on Kodiak Island which is home to nearly 3,000 Coast Guardsman, their families and civilian employees. These individuals make up nearly one third of the island's total population, and add to the materials going into the community's landfill. While the Coast Guard community has the potential to add sig-

nificantly to the amount of trash entering the environment, an award winning program was created to reduce the environmental footprint left by the Coast Guard on Kodiak.

On July 7th Integrated Support Command Kodiak received the Department of Homeland Security Environmental Achievement Award for its base wide recycling efforts at the large unit level. While the award recognized individuals and units throughout the Coast Guard on nearly all aspects of environmental conservation, the base here has excelled in recycling.

The program which was put in place in 1999 has diverted more than 3,586,000 pounds of recyclable materials from the local land fill. Last year the program expanded to include additional types of materials not previously recycled, thereby further increasing the amount of materials recycled.

"In 2006 alone, ISC recycled approximately 415,910 pounds of cardboard, 213,932 pounds of paper products, 21,008 pounds of plastics and 5,000 pounds of aluminum cans," explained Chief Warrant Officer Stephen Allbee, ISC Kodiak recycling program director. "Being able to divert that amount of recyclable materials from the land fill helps extend the life of the land fill and helps the community that we are all part of."

Acting not only as good stewards of the environment but also responsible managers of taxpayer dollars the ISC Kodiak recycling program redirected \$32,812 of solid waste disposal fees toward recycling last year alone, Allbee explained. Although there is a cost to operate the recycling program, the materials themselves help to keep the program running. All of the recyclable materials are processed through the community recycling center and shipped off island for resale in the recycled materials market. Allbee added that the program is in place because it's the right thing to do, not because it's the cheapest thing in the short term.

While the Coast Guard produces its share of garbage, it has historically recycled more. In comparison to the rest of the island's population, the Coast Guard is responsible for one third to one half of the recyclables that leave the island, explained Rick Pillans, owner of Threshold Recycling in Kodiak.

"The Coast Guard does a lot for Kodiak especially by the large amount that they recycle, Pillans said. "They could just as easily throw it away and fill up the land fill and no one would know the difference, but they went out of their way and set up a great recycling program."

During fiscal year 2006 the amount of materials ISC Kodiak recycled reached almost 656,000 pounds; an increase of almost 450% more than that of 1999, Allbee noted.

In order to make the recycling on the Coast Guard base even better Allbee added they are trying to make it easy for everyone by constantly improving the program.

"We try to put the dumpsters in easily assessable locations, as well as making sure all the housing residents have a blue recycle bin," he said.

Even though the Coast Guard is recycling a substantial amount, Allbee noted that even with that in mind there is always a lot of room for improvement.

Members of the Coast Guard community who would like more information about recycling and recycling locations on base should contact Chief Warrant Officer Steve Allbee at 487-5320 extension 257. Members of the Kodiak community who would like more information on recycling and drop off locations may contact Threshold Recycling at 486-6551.