

Directorate of Public Works-Environmental

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Unit tours water facilities to prepare for missions By Christine Luciano

The 413th Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserves unit with the U.S. Army Civil Affairs Psychological Operations Command out of Lubbock, Texas recently came to Fort Hood for their annual training.

Like many other reserve units, the battalion came to Fort Hood to train for weapons qualification, simulation training with civilians, and security procedures. As the Soldiers trained to prepare them for missions overseas, "Our unit does a variety of things from civil military cooperation to humanitarian assistance," said Maj. Doil O'Steen, 413th S-5 Officer.



"There are many situations in which we are helping reestablish the civilian government," said Maj. Fred Harmon, 413th functional specialties officer. "We train our Soldiers how to go into an area and assess the hospitals, the water treatment plants, and sewage plants to find the state of a municipality, a city, or a small town."

When the battalion deploys, they go into other countries to help build up the infrastructure. One of the key components to infrastructure is water, a critical resource in any country.



Harmon coordinated with Gary Goodman, the Directorate of Public Works' drinking water specialist to take a tour of the Bell County water treatment facility and Fort Hood's main pump station. The battalion toured the sites to learn about the tests, processes, chemicals, and supplies need to make these systems work.

"Many of our Soldiers have not seen these types of facilities," Maj. Harmon said.

The battalion has had training in the past where they have used the Lubbock water treatment plant. However, not all the Soldiers were able to tour the plant. Harmon took the opportunity during their annual training at Fort Hood to bring 52 of his Soldiers to visit the facilities here at the installation.

“This tour helps educate our Soldiers about what a plant looks like and gives them a base line reference when they go into another country,” Maj. Harmon said.

Although, the Soldiers may be deployed to third world countries where plants are 40 or 50 years old, the concept is the same. Larry Drake from the Bell Country Water Control and Improvement District No. 1 Water Treatment Plant explained to the Soldiers that although technology has advanced and the water treatment processes have evolved, it has not changed. “The main thing is filtration and disinfectant chemicals,” Drake said.

The Soldiers also toured the Fort Hood pump station to learn that adequate pressure is key to maintaining safe water to the customer.

“Pressure is important because if water is going in one direction it’s not scouring the pipe,” said Clarence Pierce III, DPW’s Water Utilities Operator. “By maintaining pressure, the water is always going out the system and into the community.”



“You never want to run out of water because it is critical at all times,” Pierce said.

Through the hands-on interactive tours, Soldiers learned how the filters work, the process to treat the water, and how that water is pumped into the community.



“The tours gave our Soldiers a better understanding of how the system operates,” Harmon said.

“What Goodman gave us is something we couldn’t get anywhere else,” Harmon said. “Our treatment plants are different up here in Lubbock so this tour gave us a good opportunity to train our Soldiers.”

The knowledge from the tours will be used as a foundation to help Soldiers make assessments, recommendations, and gather further information to help rebuild the infrastructure in other countries.