

From the Shore: Navy installations take energy initiatives to the next level

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Navy Installations Command (NIC) has embarked on several aggressive strategies to reduce energy consumption, increase efficiency, and achieve the Secretary of the Navy's goal to have 1 gigawatt (1GW) of renewable energy on or near Department of Navy installations by December 2015.

Around the world, Navy installations are implementing energy projects to meet the Navy's energy goals. At Naval Air Station

(NAS) Sigonella, Italy, for example, solar hot water panels have been installed on 13 barracks to reduce the amount of energy needed to keep the building's water supply hot. In Sasebo, Japan, solar panels were installed on the public works building roof to improve energy efficiency for the building and base, and at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., four wind turbines were erected at the child development center to help generate alternative power. These changes are just a few of the initiatives that are taking place.



131017-N-ZE250-002 NAPLES, Italy (Oct. 17, 2013) A view of Solar panels installed on top of a parking garage at Naval Support Activity Naples Capodichino. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Weston Jones/Released)

In addition to achieving these energy goals, NIC has developed the Navy Shore Geospatial Energy Module (NSGEM) to track the progress being made. An interactive web map, the NSGEM visually depicts monthly energy for each facility at every installation to monitor energy goal achievements.

According to Sandrine Schultz, Navy Installations Command's energy program director, the NSGEM tool was initiated in October 2012 and is easy to use. It also has played an important role in the Energy Biggest Loser (EBL) competition taking place across installations in the Region Europe, Africa, and Southwest Asia (EURAFSWA) area of responsibility.

"NSGEM is very important because it provides an easy way for Sailors to understand efficiency at commands across the Navy all the way down to the facility level," said Schultz. "We use NSGEM to determine the energy bill for competing facilities in the Energy Biggest Loser competition."

The EBL competition was initiated at Naval Support Activity Souda Bay, Greece, one of seven installations under Region EURAFSWA to motivate competition among them. Through simple acts such as turning off lights when leaving the room, unplugging devices that are not in use, and turning off computers at the end of the work day, commands are finding easy ways to reduce power consumption. The winning installation is chosen based on the greatest percent of reduction in electrical consumption.

"The number one electrical loads on Navy installations are heaters and air conditioners," said Cmdr. Jay Cavnar, energy and utilities branch head at NIC.

Cavnar hopes that innovative programs such as the EBL competition will spread to all Navy installations world-wide and raise awareness on ways to reduce energy consumption.

While only in its second year, the EBL event is making great strides and creating a buzz.

"We make sure to turn off any equipment that is not being used, such as computer monitors and printers," said Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Howard Foster, assigned to Naval Support Activity Naples, Italy. "It's a team effort that everyone does their part in order to help conserve energy in our office and around the building. Last year, Unaccompanied Housing came in last place and we are trying to make sure that does not happen this year."

Cavnar and Schultz work directly with Navy regions and installations to identify inefficiencies, and also work with utility companies to find ways to reduce power and fuel consumption across the Navy shore enterprise.