



# *Report to* **STAKEHOLDERS**

February 2009

Volume 14 No. 2

## **Tours unearth hidden gems**

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**Base group  
honored at  
White House**  
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# Report to STAKEHOLDERS

*Report to Stakeholders* is a publication of Edwards Air Force Base, 95th Air Base Wing, Environmental Management. Its purpose is to inform and educate the public, base workers and residents about continuing environmental and safety efforts on base. It currently has a circulation of 6,000, including about 2,000 subscribers.

Contents of the *Report to Stakeholders* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

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## HAZARDOUS COMMUNICATION TRAINING

Hazardous Communication training is a tool to promote awareness of potential hazards in the workplace, whether that is in a shop or office building. A large part of HAZCOM training is rooted in managing hazardous materials — which can range from a bottle of rubbing alcohol to a bottle of hydrochloric acid — but there is more to it. The training is also highly customized to the workplace of the employee. For instance, if the employee works in an office, he or she could be trained on exposure to copier toner, or what to do in the case that a drawer is left open and they trip over it.

“HAZCOM training is designed to make employees aware of the health and physical hazards associated with doing their job,” said Brian Stone, pollution prevention specialist. “It’s important because it provides them with knowledge on how to reduce risks and what to do in the case of an accident.”

Topics covered in HAZCOM training:

- What are your workplace-specific hazards?
- How can you safely use hazardous materials?
- How can one locate and read Material Safety Data Sheets?
- What personal protective equipment is necessary for which tasks?
- What to do in the case of an accident or emergency?

For more information on the Air Force Instruction that provides guidance on HAZCOM training, you may go to [www.e-publishing.af.mil](http://www.e-publishing.af.mil) and search for AFI 90-821. Supervisors are ultimately responsible for training employees within 30 days of an assignment to make them aware of any hazardous materials or safety risks in their workplace. Employees who have not received hazardous communication training should contact their supervisor for training. If the supervisor cannot train the employee or has not been trained, the employee may contact the safety office on base, at (661) 277-3316 or the base’s bioenvironmental office at (661) 277-3272 for more information.

# Base group honored at White House

**E**dwards Air Force Base won first place among federal agencies in the 2008 Electronics Reuse and Recycling Campaign for large facilities in the Western Region. The competition, sponsored by the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive, is in its third year.

“We were excited to win!” said Layi Oyelowo, pollution prevention program manager at Environmental Management.

The base reused, recycled or donated 187,370 pounds of electronic equipment to earn the recognition.

“Winning the award exemplifies the fact that we at Edwards work hard, take our jobs seriously and do whatever it takes to just do the right thing.”

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 40 million computers become obsolete in one year, according to a press release from OFEE. To tackle this issue, the office created a challenge for federal agencies to reuse, recycle and donate electronic equipment, keeping these items out of growing landfills.

“What the government recognized, is that computer technology is ever-evolving,” Oyelowo said. “It takes an average of three to five years before your computer can no longer process newer software, security patches and so forth, introduced into the system.

“If computers aren’t replaced, they would be too slow to run and that could lead to work stoppage because we rely heavily on access to computers,” Oyelowo said.

“Our winning is not because we have too many computers and are excessing them, but it is that we are efficient and have a scheduled plan for replacing computers,” Oyelowo said. “Before the technology overtakes the computer you have, we replace it.”

According to Oyelowo, the base has a scheduled plan for replacing computers every three to five years. The communications group monitors this plan and replaces computers before they could potentially hinder work.

In response to Executive Order 13423: *Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management,*



**SMILING AT THE WHITE HOUSE** — A few members of the Edwards campaign team are presented an award from the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive for their efforts in the 2008 Electronics Reuse and Recycling Campaign. From left, Michael Smith, Samuel Brown, Brian Stone, Layi Oyelowo, federal environmental executive Joe Cascio, and Department of Energy program manager Richard Kidd.

Edwards established a policy requiring environmentally sound electronic equipment tracking and disposition at the end of a product’s life at the base. Many of the replaced computers and other electronics still function, but are not as efficient as newer, more environmentally sound equipment, Oyelowo said.

Through an agreement with the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office, Edwards’ electronic equipment can be: reused at another location on base or federal agency; refurbished for reuse or recycled when the parts can be used to make new equipment; or donated when they are given to schools and nonprofit organizations through a program called Computers for Learning.

All computer systems on base are Energy Star™-enabled and nearly all computer systems purchased last year meet EPEAT, or electronic product environmental assessment tool standards. This keeps the base in compliance with federal guidelines.

The campaign team at Edwards plans to participate in the 2009 Electronics Reuse and Recycling Campaign and Oyelowo hopes to do more this year.

“We realized there are some holes in the tracking that need to be closed so that we can maximize reporting numbers,” Oyelowo said. “We plan to patch the holes and continue to report, so that we can continue to be an example in this field of the mandate [Executive Order 13423].

“The mandate drives so much of what we do,” Oyelowo added, “I was really glad to see that we compiled the numbers and received recognition from outside agencies. That echoes what we knew all along: that we do a good job!”

The campaign covered activities from Oct. 1, 2007 through Sept. 30, 2008, and more than 9 million pounds of excessed or surplus electronics were reused, recycled or donated according to OFEE. The campaign involved 124 facilities from 14 federal agencies, and 18 received awards for their accomplishments.



**SEEING THE SITES** — The Edwards Air Force Base Officers Spouses Club take a seat on top of a Vietnam-era tank at the Precision Impact Range Area (PIRA) Downfall. The spouses attended an Environmental Management tour and Downfall was just one of the many stops on their itinerary.

## Tours unearth hidden aspects of bombing range, remote base areas

**M**oonscape. No man's land. Desolation. The pictures that come to mind for most people when thinking about a bombing range aren't pretty. However, these pictures are far from the truth at Edwards Air Force Base's Precision Impact Range Area (PIRA).

Some of the base's best, most beautiful wildflower displays grow on the PIRA, said Kathy Loetzerich, the base Environmental Resource Specialist who covers the PIRA. "In places, the Joshua trees are so numerous they almost seem like a forest."

The PIRA makes up 60,800 acres of the 300,723 acres that is Edwards. Of that, only 1,800 acres are cleared for target use. Most of the PIRA is relatively untouched by historic man: the dry, desert environment meant the land was not desirable for emigrating farmers. Some mining occurred in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and there are ruins of a few old homesteads.

The Army Air Corps arrived on the scene 80 years ago. Now the Air Force keeps the public out with monitored fencing. One way on-base groups and visitors can experience the beauty of the

PIRA and other unique features of the base nearby is through educational tours conducted by Environmental Management (EM).

Bob Wood, director of Environmental Management, sees these tours as an important job for EM. "We can tell folks all about yardangs or the lakebed during a briefing, but people understand better when we go out and see them up close," he said. "They comprehend better when they can kick the lakebed clay and get the dust on their teeth."

Past groups to take tours have included civic leader organizations and college

students. “We regularly take out new base leaders and their families,” Wood said. “We’ve had several base groups during Wingman Days.”

Wood thinks it is important for base workers to get out of the office and learn about Edwards. “People don’t know all the parts of their own base,” he said. “Our tours can get them out to places they can’t normally access.”

Most environmental tours focus on the base’s natural and cultural resources. “They really start to understand the magnitude and scope of the base and learn about the complexity of the ecosystem,” Wood said. “When you visit a World War II Army rifle range here at Edwards, it puts the history of the Air Force in a different perspective.”

Once an archaeologist for the base, Loetzerich now leads many of the tours because she knows a lot about the history of the base. She’s taken groups to see prehistoric and historic sites including Ettinger Cave near the PIRA. Loetzerich said archaeologists suspect Native American women conducted fertility rituals at the cave before the Spanish arrived. Ettinger cave contains the only known rock art on Edwards. Not far from the cave, tours stop at Downfall, where

workers maintain the bombing targets on the range.

Besides providing a usually needed bathroom break, the Downfall facility features several Vietnam-era tanks that tour participants can check out up close.

Other historical areas available for tours near the PIRA include the ruins of the original 1930s Army Air Corps camp on the east side of Rogers Dry Lake, abandoned adobe homestead ruins, and an area where suspected moonshiners set up business.

Yet often native biology steals the show from base history, especially on the PIRA. “I’ve seen desert candle flowers that were 3 feet high after a wet winter,” Loetzerich said. “Elsewhere, they were maybe 12 inches high.” The undisturbed plant life of the range helps native animals thrive there. “Our biologists have seen many bobcats and even badgers out there,” she said.

Much of the PIRA has been designated critical habitat for the desert tortoise. The desert tortoise is protected by federal law because it is considered a threatened species. There are more desert tortoises here than any place else on the base. Most base sightings of desert tortoise have been at the range.

Both Wood and Loetzerich say the range operators out at Downfall take special care with desert tortoises. They generally avoid cleared areas like bombing targets, but do cross roads. “The speed limit on the dirt roads is 35,” Loetzerich said. “When they know the tortoises are active, they’ll often slow down to 15 just so they have plenty of stopping distance if they see a tortoise ahead on a road.”

Besides living wonders, Edwards’ unique geology attracts people. Geology students have toured the base several times to see the many different geological features at the base. The clay lakebeds to the west of the PIRA are the largest obvious features. Haystack Butte, on the edge of the PIRA, is made up of hexagonal basalt columns seldom seen elsewhere. The yardangs north of the PIRA — sometimes called petrified sand dunes — are found only a few places on Earth. They are more common on Mars.

Environmental Management invites both on- and off-base groups for free environmental tours. Groups interested in scheduling a tour should contact Gary Hatch, Environmental Public Affairs at (661) 277-1454 or e-mail [95abw.pae@edwards.af.mil](mailto:95abw.pae@edwards.af.mil).

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## Redemption values equal money in pocket

**E**dwards Air Force Base and California residents are taking advantage of statewide incentives for recycling plastics, glass and aluminum, putting more money in their pockets and less waste in landfills.

Edwards Air Force Base has a certified recycling center, said Mike Ferola, landfill program manager at Edwards. The center pays the state-mandated prices per pound or per container for all California Redemption Value beverage containers.

California Redemption Value — better known as CRV — is the amount of money recycling centers pay consumers in exchange for their empty bottles and cans. Customers pay CRV up front when purchasing products sold in recyclable containers, and can be reimbursed if the empty containers are taken to a recycling center.

The recycling center at Edwards accepts all seven plastics, aluminum, glass and bimetal — two separate metals joined together, such as tin cans — containers from base residents and workers. Ferola added that the California Department of Conservation Division of Recycling — which administers the *California Beverage Container Recycling and Litter Reduction Act* — develops a per-pound average each year for the different CRV containers.

For example, there are approximately 31.4 aluminum cans in a pound, and multiplying that by five cents makes the per-pound

rate \$1.57. Meaning, if you take one pound of aluminum to a recycling center you will receive \$1.57.

“All beverage container values are based on five cents each for a container that is less than 24 ounces and 10 cents each for 24 ounces or larger containers,” Ferola added. “The different sizes and densities are what make each per-pound rate different.”

According to Ferola, aluminum cans are a popular item recycled at Edwards. Aluminum is a unique metal that can be recycled repeatedly without losing any of its value.

Another common item is the number one plastic, polyethylene terephthalate (PET), which is a fully recyclable product. Recycled PET is a desirable secondary resource for remanufacturing the same products and can be used for developing new products in many industrial areas. The plastic is versatile, allowing companies to use it in most production applications.

The current CRV for PET is 92 cents per pound, and it can be found in common product containers used for soft drinks, malt beverages, water, mouthwash, peanut butter and vegetable oil. One way to find out whether something is made with PET is to locate the dot or chasing arrows located on the container.

High density polyethylene (HDPE), otherwise known as the number two plastic, is valued at 54 cents per pound and can be

# Base expands in-house storage to support historical preservation

It's an organization junkie's dream: a storage unit that takes up less space when it's not in use. Storage space for artifacts tripled when a mobile shelving system was installed at the Edwards Air Force Base Curation Facility in November. The system also saved Air Force officials time and money.

"We were running out of space," said James Johannesmeyer, an archaeologist with Environmental Management. "This shelving gives us more storage space within the same amount of square footage as the old shelving unit."

Even with a hefty price tag of about \$150,000, the shelving system was a cost-saving decision.

"Our other options were to construct a new building or expand our current building," said Debi Crosby, the archaeologist who manages the Curation Facility. "Either option would have cost us twice as much as the mobile shelving unit. And they would have only doubled, not tripled, the amount of storage."

The new shelving unit works like an accordion on an electrical pulley system. The unit's mobility eliminates the need for fixed aisles between racks. When the shelves are not in use, the racks are compressed together. At the press of a button, the racks roll out on a pulley system, creating an aisle where it is needed. Built-in safety features prevent anyone from being trapped accidentally between the moving racks.

"Even if you panic and forget to trip the laser beams at the bottom of each rack, the unit will automatically stop moving once it touches a solid object," Crosby said. "It's like putting your hand in between two elevator doors that are about to close."

State-of-the-art safety and convenience are only side benefits of the new shelving unit. According to Crosby, the shelving system has added as much as 10 years of storage life to the Curation Facility.

Base historic preservation officer Dr. David Ruggles explained why expanding the storage at Curation was such a necessity.



**NEW AND IMPROVED** — Archaeologist Jim Johannesmeyer looks through a box on one of the newly installed shelves at the Curation Facility.

"We are required by law to appropriate artifacts and records," Ruggles said. "Primarily, it is our responsibility to properly maintain or curate these items and any associated information. By doing so, we ensure that what happened historically in this area is recorded and managed for posterity."

If the base didn't have the Curation Facility, artifacts would have to be transported and stored at an off-base location. According to Ruggles, storage space for artifacts is at a premium and must meet certain criteria. For example, the artifacts and documents need to be in an environment that is temperature and humidity controlled, protected from pests or rodents and stored where light won't fade or damage the items.

Base archaeologist Roscoe Loetzerich estimated that storing artifacts off base would cost about \$350 per cubic foot.

"We house several hundred cubic feet

of artifacts," Loetzerich said. "So costs would be in the tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of dollars per year just to store them."

Unique artifacts — like a Native American Anasazi piece that indicates proof of historic trade from east of the Colorado River — are not the only things housed at the Curation Facility. Other items include photos; site records with detailed information about each of the 4,000 archaeological sites on base; interview tapes of 'old-timers' who lived or worked in this area in the 1950s and 60s; and traveling displays used for outreach education.

"Edwards has the most recorded history of identified human occupation of this area dating back to 12,000 years ago," Ruggles said. "We have a responsibility to the American people to preserve this history."

Base archaeologist Lawrence McGetrick agreed. "There's very little documentation of Europeans interacting with Native

Americans in this area,” he said. “So, the artifacts are all we have left for learning about the Native Americans who lived in this area.

“The main reason archaeology is so important is because it’s a nonrenewable resource. Once an archaeological deposit is gone, it’s gone. Once those pieces of information are removed, you’re not able to get the whole picture.”

The 301,000 acres now known as Edwards Air Force Base were not always occupied by the military. Some of the younger historic sites — those from the 19th and 20th centuries — indicate home-

steading, mining, ranching, railroading and moonshine activities. When inhabitants left the area, the remaining structures and items left clues as to how people lived in this area.

“There’s not much recorded information about this area out there,” Ruggles said. “It’s basically a black hole with regards to archaeological data. That’s why so many people do research here,” Ruggles said.

As sole gatekeeper of local history, the Curation Facility has become a prime destination for archaeological research.

“The Curation Facility is not a museum,” Ruggles clarified. “It’s not open to the

general public. You need to have a legitimate reason to access the records and artifacts.”

“Locations of archaeological sites are protected under law,” Crosby explained. “Only qualified researchers can have access to the collection. This is normally restricted to archaeologists or students working under an archaeologist. Tribal requests to visit sites are also honored.”

According to Crosby’s records, the Curation Facility has had 1,380 research-related visits since mid-fiscal year 2002, when records started being kept. In fiscal year 2008 alone, there were 88 visits totaling 109 hours.

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## REDEMPTION VALUE

### From page 5

recycled for a CRV. Household cleaner bottles and small milk and juice bottles are examples of HDPE and can be recycled to make more household cleaner bottles, pens, floor tile and picnic tables. However, milk jugs and fruit juice containers 46 ounces or larger have no redemption value.

To promote recycling, Ferola and his team participate in outreach events to educate base residents and workers about CRV and other recycling opportunities. They support Environmental Management’s Earth Day and America Recycles Day activities each year.

“In the last 12 months we have rewarded customers with a refund value for 23.45 tons of CRV containers at the Edwards recycling center,” Ferola said. “This is only CRV-eligible beverage containers that were brought to the recycle center by customers. This does not include any recyclables picked up in the housing containers or at the base facilities.”

Over the last two years, refunds for in-demand recyclables such as aluminum, glass and plastics one, two and three have steadily increased by two to three cents per pound.

According to the Department of Conservation, Californians recycled over 7.5 billion beverage containers from January through June 2008. These results were an increase of nearly 600 million beverage containers from the same period in 2007. Californians take the lead in the nation for continuing to recycle the most bottles and cans.

Although California leads the way for recycling, it is not the only state to reward those who do. Other states, such as Hawaii and Connecticut use the Container Deposit Law, better known as the bottle bill. The bottle bill is similar to the CRV and the law requires a minimum refundable deposit on malt beverages, soft drinks and other beverage containers in order to encourage recycling.

The recycling center on base processed more than 843 tons of recyclables in 2007, keeping them out of the landfill and putting them back in the recycling circuit.

If curbside pickup is not an option where people live, they may drop off recyclables at any of the small, self-contained recycling centers often found near markets, offices and parks. Those interested may find a convenient recycling location by zip code at

## CALIFORNIA REFUND VALUE

Some beverages sold in aluminum cans, bimetals, glass or plastics require a deposit when purchased. This deposit can be refunded when you turn in the container at any state recycling center, including the Base Recycling Center. Below is a list of common beverage containers that have California Refund Value and common beverages that do not:

<p><b>Beverages that have CRV:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beer</li> <li>Carbonated and mineral water</li> <li>Carbonated soft drinks</li> <li>Coffee and tea drinks</li> <li>Fruit drinks</li> <li>Fruit juices packed in containers less than 46 ounces</li> <li>Noncarbonated water</li> <li>Sport drinks</li> <li>Vegetable juices packed in containers less than or equal to 16 ounces</li> </ul>	<p><b>Beverages that do not have CRV:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wine coolers</li> <li>Fruit juice in containers 46 ounces or more</li> <li>Infant Formula</li> <li>Milk</li> <li>Medical Food</li> <li>Nutritional Supplements</li> <li>Vegetable Juice in containers larger than 16 ounces</li> <li>Wine</li> </ul>
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**CRV Pricing**

Beverages come in different containers and each container type has a different refund value. Here are the current refund value for aluminum cans, bimetals, glass and the seven types of plastic used to store beverages.

Beverage Container	CRV Price
<b>ALUMINUM CANS</b>	\$1.57 per pound
<b>BIMETALS</b>	\$0.24 per pound
<b>GLASS BOTTLES</b>	\$0.11 per pound
<b>PLASTIC</b>	
Plastic #1	\$0.96 per pound or paid per container, the CRV is \$0.05. Also if container is 24 ounces or larger, CRV per container is \$0.10.
Plastic #2	\$0.54 per pound
Plastic #3	\$0.56 per pound
Plastic #4	\$2.14 per pound
Plastic #5	\$0.31 per pound
Plastic #6	\$3.56 per pound
Plastic #7	\$0.41 per pound

\*Note: Other containers eligible for CRV have "CA CASH REFUND" or "CA REDEMPTION VALUE" printed on them.

[www.bottlesandcans.com/dev/locator.cfm](http://www.bottlesandcans.com/dev/locator.cfm).

Recycling helps Edwards comply with federal, state and local mandates. For more information on the Edwards Air Force Base Qualified Recycling Program, contact Milt Riley at (661) 277-2431 or the Base Landfill at (661) 277-3867.

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## Where to Find More INFORMATION



Published data and documents relating to Environmental Management are available for public review in information repositories at three locations. The current information repositories are located in the cities of Lancaster and Rosamond, as well as Edwards Air Force Base. They are updated when new documents are released.

For questions about information in the repositories, you may contact Gary Hatch, Environmental Public Affairs at (661) 277-1454 or by e-mail at [95abw.pae@edwards.af.mil](mailto:95abw.pae@edwards.af.mil). Here is a list of our current information repositories:

### Edwards Air Force Base Library

5 W. Yeager Blvd.  
Building 2665  
Edwards AFB, Calif.  
(661) 275-2665

Hours of operation: Mon-Thu 9:30 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Fri 9:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
Sat-Sun 10:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.

### Kern County Public Library

**Wanda Kirk Branch**  
3611 Rosamond Blvd.  
Rosamond, Calif.  
(661) 256-3236

Hours of operation: Tue-Wed 12 p.m. – 8 p.m.  
Thu-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

### Los Angeles County Public Library

601 W. Lancaster Blvd.  
Lancaster, Calif.  
(661) 948-5029

Hours of operation: Mon-Wed 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.  
Thu-Fri 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Sat 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

For general information about Edwards and an electronic version of the latest issue of Report to Stakeholders or other documents of public interest, please visit the following link:

<http://www.edwards.af.mil/library/environment/index.asp>.

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## Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Information

The RAB is made up of appointed representatives from communities in and around Edwards Air Force Base, regulators from federal and state agencies and base officials. The board's purpose is to provide a forum for two-way communication among base restoration officials, regulators and representatives regarding the cleanup of contamination from past military activities.

The board meets quarterly, rotating meeting locations in communities surrounding the base. The public is welcome to attend. If you have any questions or concerns about the cleanup activities going on at Edwards, you

may contact your community's RAB member or Gary Hatch, Environmental Public Affairs, at (661) 277-1454.

### Next Quarterly Meeting

Date: May 2009  
Time: 5:30 p.m.  
Location: will be determined at a later time.

## RAB Members

### OFF-BASE COMMUNITIES

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Vacant

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