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AEDC commander hosts COVID-19 town hall

By Bradley Hicks
AEDC Public Affairs

Arnold Engineering Development Complex Commander Col. Jeffrey Geraghty hosted a virtual town hall April 8 to update AEDC personnel on steps being taken to mitigate COVID-19 exposure at Arnold Air Force Base, answer employee-submitted questions and address concerns shared among members of the workforce.

The Facebook Live broadcast came less than a week after the first positive case of COVID-19 at Arnold was reported April 3 and days after base leadership announced a change in operating posture to reduce workforce risk.

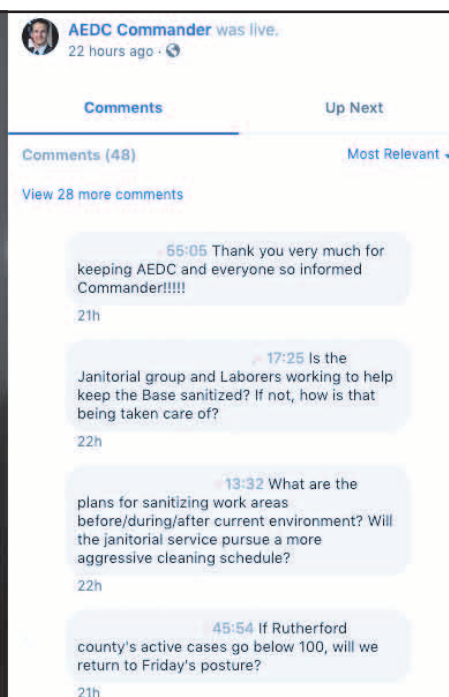
"I definitely want you to know that the leadership team at AEDC cares about you," Geraghty said to open the town hall. "We care about your health. We are working day and night, weekends included, to try to make sure that we take care of your health. Once that's taken care of, then we can get as much

of the mission done as we can, the most important parts of the mission, and then we ensure that we take care of each other within Team AEDC, as well. Those are my priorities."

During his town hall, Geraghty said the shared goal among base leadership is to keep COVID-19 out of Arnold to the greatest extent possible and that the AEDC geographically separated units remain uninfected.

"That's still the risk mitigation posture that we have," he said. "That's why we have the base restricted access, that type of thing. We want to keep COVID-19 off our base entirely. However, we're also committed to communicating transparently and, when there is a case, we are definitely going to let the workforce know. That's just an effort to protect their health, as well."

The decision to move Arnold AFB to an "Operationally Urgent" posture took effect on April 6. In this posture, some mission activities are curtailed



Arnold Engineering Development Commander (AEDC) Col. Jeffrey Geraghty conducts a virtual town hall via Facebook April 8. Geraghty provided an AEDC COVID-19 update aimed at the workforce and answered questions from AEDC team members through Facebook that were presented by AEDC Public Affairs Chief Jason Austin. (Screen capture) (This image has been altered by obscuring images and names within it for privacy reasons.)

and access to the installation is limited to those employees required to complete critical test missions and support functions.

For weeks, Arnold leaders have monitored the situation across the country and in

surrounding counties, updating the base Health Protection Condition to keep personnel informed on the exposure risk.

To limit those on base coming from COVID-19 "hotspots," or areas with higher numbers of

positive virus cases, 100 percent screening was implemented on March 21 for those seeking entry into the base.

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Jolly Green II taken to extremes in AEDC test facility

By Samuel King Jr.

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.—An HH-60W Jolly Green II, the Air Force's new combat search and rescue helicopter, completed a month-long trial of extremes inside the McKinley Climatic Lab April 2.

The Sikorsky test aircraft endured real temperatures ranging from 120 degrees to minus 60 degrees Fahrenheit as well as 45 mph winds coupled with heavy rainfall. All of those scenarios were created within the lab's 55,000 square foot test chamber.

The goal of these punishing tests was to prove the new aircraft's sustainability in any operational environment.

"Operating the HH-

60W in the extreme conditions was a truly unique experience as a pilot and a tester," said Lt. Col. Ryan Coates, an 88th Test and Evaluation Squadron pilot, who performed most of the testing.

"Checking system performance under the stress of heat, cold, heavy wind and rain will give us real-world data regarding the helicopter's capability to perform the rescue mission worldwide in various environments, which is exactly what the operator needs to make solid employment decisions."

Once the lab technicians created the extreme environments, aircrew would enter the aircraft and perform

See **JOLLY GREEN II**, page 3



An HH-60W Jolly Green II sits under bright lights used to create heat in the McKinley Climatic Lab March 19 at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. The Air Force's new combat search and rescue helicopter and crews experienced temperature extremes from 120 to -60 degrees Fahrenheit as well as torrential rain during the month of testing. The tests evaluate how the aircraft and its instrumentation, electronics and crew fare under the extreme conditions it will face in the operational Air Force. (U.S. Air Force photo by Samuel King Jr.)

Donations of masks help Arnold AFB battle coronavirus



Karina, left, and Kolleen Roessig work together to make reusable cloth face masks. The sisters are making the masks to donate to help combat the spread of the coronavirus. (Courtesy photo)

By Jill Pickett
AEDC Public Affairs

Donated masks are helping keep members of the Arnold Air Force Base community as safe as possible in the face of the coronavirus threat.

Both N95 masks and reusable cloths masks have been donated to the base.

Fifty N95 masks were donated to Arnold AFB Fire and Emergency Services, by a retired member of the Air Force and former base employee. FES operations include an ambulance service. Crews respond to emergencies on base and provide mutual aid off base.

"We greatly appreciate the donation," said Gary Horn, an FES assistant chief. "I don't know how many times I thanked him that day when I picked the masks up."

FES has also been contacted by a local distillery to arrange a donation of a case of disinfectant.

Master Sgt. Joshua Suggs, Arnold AFB Medical Aid Station branch chief, said the cloth masks will be placed at the entrance to the Commissary to permit beneficiaries that do not have their own mask to enter the facility.

Arnold Engineering Development Complex Commander Col. Jeffrey Geraghty, in line with the Defense Commissary Agency's guidance, issued a directive that effective April 10 all Base Exchange and Commissary patrons must wear face coverings while in the facilities.

"I love it anytime someone offers to step up and volunteer or donate something. More so during a time of crisis," Suggs said. "It's heartwarming to see people are thinking of others, even during these scary times."

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Col. Jeffrey Geraghty
AEDC Commander

Tunnel 9 executing mission during COVID-19 pandemic

By Deidre Moon
AEDC Public Affairs

Arnold Engineering Development Complex leadership at the White Oak site and Hypervelocity Wind Tunnel 9 have been implementing mitigation measures against COVID-19 over the last several weeks.

According to Gregory Fox, Tunnel 9 Branch Manager for the Test Operations and Sustainment contractor, the mitigation efforts continue to change daily.

“In order to be able to execute the mission during this crisis, several changes have been made to limit exposure,” Fox said. “Meetings have been reduced in size or eliminated and alternate means of communication are being used, such as teleconferences, Skype meetings, and using the phone and email more.

For the wind tunnel facility and plant, occupancy limits have been placed on the control rooms to only allow the minimum required to execute this current test program, which is below the limit of 10, and to keep spacing without the use of PPE (personal protective equipment).”

Fox added that his personnel are adjusting to these new requirements and are looking out for one another.

“They are waiting their turn or communicating if they need to enter an area for mission-critical reasons,” he said. “Daily tasks

are reviewed prior to execution by the team to figure out how to maintain the spacing required and still get the job done. Any risks are understood and if required, a mitigation plan developed for approval.”

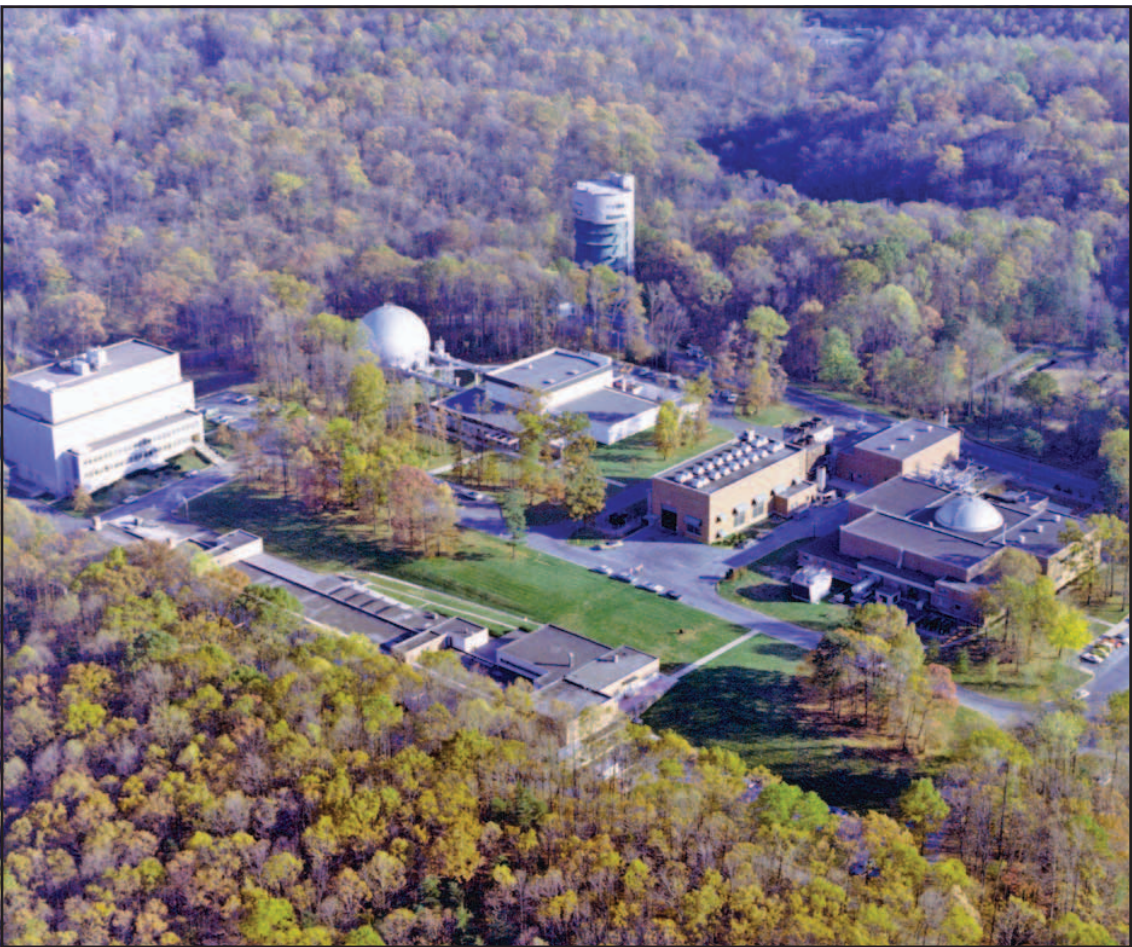
The Tunnel 9 team is also looking ahead at what may be coming next and making assessments.

“While execution of some tasks is slower due to them having to be done in series rather than parallel, the team is executing the test while maintaining safety and focus,” Fox said.

To help keep the site safe, visitors have been postponed or canceled and all non-mission essential deliveries or subcontracts that can wait are doing so. If on-site mission critical deliveries are required, a mitigation plan is put in place for each occurrence.

Hand sanitizer and wipes have been strategically placed around Tunnel 9 and are being utilized by the employees. The janitorial staff onsite has also increased its cleaning schedule.

“The theme here is to keep COVID-19 out of the site and keep everyone safe while at work,” Fox said. “The team is under pressure but overall understands the why and does not want any exposure so they are very accommodating to these changes. Keeping the site clean is important since the location of the facility is inside and surrounded by



Leadership at the Hypervelocity Wind Tunnel 9, located at White Oak, Maryland has implemented mitigation measures against COVID-19. (U.S. Air Force file photo)

hotspot counties in terms of the number-of-cases criteria.”

AEDC White Oak Air Force Site Director, Joseph Coblish, added his deep appreciation to the crew during this difficult time.

“I am extremely proud of the entire Tunnel 9 team for their ability to rapidly respond to the evolving COVID-19 pan-

demie safety countermeasures imposed on them both onsite while at work, as well as in their personal lives,” Coblish said.

“Even with all of the additional pressures that seem to be happening almost on a daily basis living in a COVID-19 hotspot, they continue to professionally execute our important National Defense Strategy hypersonic

test mission. I truly appreciate every one of our team members at White Oak for all they do to make this happen each day.”

As of April 3, Montgomery County, Maryland, where Tunnel 9 is located, had 566 confirmed cases of COVID-19, with Maryland having 2,758 confirmed COVID-19 cases statewide.

NAS, Chugach, AEMTC delay start of negotiations

By Kathy Jacobsen
AEDC Public Affairs

Negotiations between National Aerospace Solutions, Chugach and the Air Engineering Metal Trades Council were scheduled to begin last week, but due to COVID-19, are delayed.

NAS is the largest contractor at Arnold Air Force Base with more than 1,600 people.

AEMTC is the largest union at Arnold AFB. Chugach Federal Solutions is also part of the negotiation process as a teaming subcontractor of NAS.

“Because of the social distancing, we’re delaying our negotiations,” said Alvin Cleek, president of the AEMTC. “It’s just too many people who really need to meet in person and discuss concerns. There would be at least 15-16 people in my

group alone who must be there.”

NAS (and Chugach) requested the postponement after conditions involving COVID-19 worsened and only essential personnel involved in testing were allowed on base and Tennessee’s governor asked people to limit travel and in-person meetings to groups of no more than 10 people.

“We want to continue to have a good working relation-

ship between us and the union,” said Mike Hollowell, NAS Operations and Maintenance functional manager. “It is much easier to negotiate across the table in person than by some other method. Meeting face-to-face allows everyone to be heard and their concerns addressed.”

AEMTC has more than 600 craft people who support the mission at AEDC. The team includes 12 different unions –

carpenters, electricians, ironworkers, laborers, operating engineers, pipefitters, painters, instrument technicians, machinists, boilermakers, sheet metal workers and teamsters (storekeepers and truck drivers).

The current contract ends at midnight June 30. Hollowell says an extension to the contract has been proposed and is under review.

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various test procedures. The crew would execute their preflight checklists and perform tasks to see if the extreme conditions affected any of the avionics, electronics, engine and other systems.

The aircrew performing the procedures were also test subjects themselves. Their own reactions and movements were evaluated in the harsh environment. For example, the cold-weather gear worn by the aircrew is much bulkier than a standard flight suit. One of the evaluations was to ensure the pilots could easily reach all of the aircraft controls in the thicker cold-weather gear.

A significant amount of the test schedule was dedicated to preparing the chamber for the extreme conditions. McKinley’s lab professionals create, break-down, and recreate again for each new test environment. Technicians worked continuously to go from a superheated 100-degree desert condition to a below freezing icebox in only three days.

“McKinley Climatic Laboratory maintains quickness and technical proficiency by retaining our own staff of highly experienced welders, machinists, electricians, instrumentation experts, test assembly personnel and refrigeration operators,” said William Higdon, the lab’s technical advisor. “Our main mission is to support the warfighter and to ensure any environment they encounter in the field; their equipment has already been proven in those extremes.”

The Jolly Green II created some unique challenges for McKinley Lab personnel. The lab technicians created a system specifically for the HH-60W to remove the aircraft’s exhaust.

Thorough exhaust removal is a critical part of maintaining the controlled temperature conditions needed for chamber testing, according to lab technicians working on the test.

The design of the ventilation system meant the aircraft’s blades were removed for the duration of the testing. The lab’s in-house fabrication shop also specially designed brackets for the aircraft’s weapons among other items.

“Successful completion of this test is absolutely shared with the Sikorsky and McKinley teams,” said Ben Walker, the lead 413th Flight Test Squadron test engineer for the effort and Air Force PALACE Acquire journeyman. “Everyone worked together extremely well and we completed on time and on budget. I am very thankful for this opportunity to perform exciting engineering work, while also supporting the warfighter.”

After testing in the climatic lab, the HH-60W will return to Sikorsky’s test facility in West Palm Beach for further evaluation. The HH-60W developmental test program is a joint effort between Sikorsky, the 413th FLTS, the 88th TES and Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center. Test aircraft are primarily split between Duke Field here and Sikorsky’s West Palm Beach facility.

“Testing on the Combat Rescue Helicopter continued amidst the chaos of COVID-19,” Lt. Col. Wayne Dirkes, the 413th FLTS operations officer. “While the situation could change at any moment, we have not lost any test schedule thus far. That is a testament to the entire team’s attitude and willingness to work through challenges.”



An HH-60W Jolly Green II sits in a frozen chamber in the McKinley Climatic Lab March 19 at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. The Air Force’s new combat search and rescue helicopter and crews experienced temperature extremes from 120 to -60 degrees Fahrenheit as well as torrential rain during the month of testing. The tests evaluate how the aircraft and its instrumentation, electronics and crew fare under the extreme conditions it will face in the operational Air Force. (U.S. Air Force photo by Samuel King Jr.)



An HH-60W Jolly Green II gets hit with 45 mph winds and drenched under 130 gallons-per-minute rain in the McKinley Climatic Lab April 1 at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. The Air Force’s new combat search and rescue helicopter and crews experienced temperature extremes from 120 to -60 degrees Fahrenheit as well as torrential rain during the month of testing. The tests evaluate how the aircraft and its instrumentation, electronics and crew fare under the extreme conditions it will face in the operational Air Force. (U.S. Air Force photo by Samuel King Jr.)

Local Air Force advocates attend AFMC events

By **Bradley Hicks**
AEDC Public Affairs

Locals serving in an organization that advocates for local Air Force bases, Air Force Materiel Command and the Air Force as a whole joined Arnold Engineering Development Complex leadership recently to attend the AFMC Senior Leader Conference and the AFMC Annual Excellence Awards banquet.

Tallahoma Utilities Authority President Brian Skelton and local businessman Mike Niederhauser, members of the AFMC’s Civic Leader Program, along with AEDC Commander Col. Jeffrey Geraghty and AEDC Superintendent Chief Master Sgt. Robert Heckman, attended the events held last month at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

Along with advocacy, the purpose of the Civic Leader Program is for its members to ascertain information from AFMC leadership to share in their communities. According to AFMC, CLP members from across the country meet twice annually to hear updates on AFMC and Air Force issues.

“At the Senior Leader Conference, the CLP members from across all of the AFMC



Mike Niederhauser, left, and Brian Skelton, third from left, members of the Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) Civic Leader Program were joined by Arnold Engineering Development Complex (AEDC) leadership in attendance of the AFMC Annual Excellence Awards Banquet, March 11 at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. Also pictured from right are AEDC Superintendent Chief Master Sgt. Robert Heckman, AEDC Commander Col. Jeffrey Geraghty, Air Force Test Center (AFTC) Commander Maj. Gen. Christopher Azzano, Arnold Air Force Base engineer and AFMC Annual Excellence Award nominee Yancee Burchett, Burchett’s wife Liz and AFTC Executive Director Dr. Eileen Bjorkman. (Courtesy photo)

bases are included in almost all of the sessions and meetings with leadership across AFMC,” Skelton said. “We learn a lot from these meetings and also provide an ‘outside of the Air Force’ perspective at times.”

The conference also provided Skelton and Niederhauser the opportunity to interface with AFMC Commander Gen. Arnold W. Bunch Jr., who Skelton and Niederhauser have each

known for the better part of a decade. “Gen. Bunch has encouraged all of us to get to know our fellow AFMC Base CLP member,” Niederhauser said. “With these friendships,

we have worked together for a common goal, especially with our fellow test members.”

Skelton and Niederhauser were two of the approximately 20 CLP members who attended the Senior Leader Conference, held March 10-12, and the awards banquet, which was held on March 11 and honored the top AFMC Airmen for 2019.

Geraghty, Heckman, Skelton and Niederhauser were on hand to show their support for Yancee Burchett, an engineer at Arnold AFB. Burchett was among the AFMC Annual Excellence Awards nominees for Civilian Category II. Burchett was named the AEDC Civilian Category II winner during the AEDC Annual Awards ceremony in February.

“Yancee is a fine engineer at AEDC,” Skelton said. “For him to be the Civilian Category II nominee means that he not only was the cream of the crop at AEDC but also across the entire Air Force Test Center command. Mike Niederhauser and I were very impressed with him. We know that AEDC is in great shape with future leaders like Yancee Burchett who continue to bring forth good, innovative ideas.”

Water update: Arnold AFB Water is Safe to Drink

By **AEDC Bioenvironmental Engineering**

During routine potable water sampling on base in June 2017, AEDC Bioenvironmental Engineering discovered drinking water sources which had elevated levels of lead in the potable drinking water. The Environmental Protection Agency action level is any detection above 15 parts per billion (ppb), or 0.015 milligrams of lead per liter of water (mg/L). These sources have been labeled, the water fountains have been disconnected and personnel in those buildings have been notified of this issue.

Any detectable level of lead in the water is of concern, but the limits that were detected, do not pose an immediate health risk to the base population. The Bioenvironmental Engineering team’s priority is to protect the health and safety of the consumers of drinking water on base. This plan includes:

1. Recommendation of utilizing an optimized corrosion control treatment (treating the water to make it less likely that lead will dissolve into the water)
 2. Evaluation of source water treatment (ensuring that lead concentration in Arnold Air Force Base drinking water is below the EPA action level)
 3. Institute a public education program
- All aspects of the plan have been implemented and AEDC Bioenvironmental Engineering continues to monitor the progress.

It is common for facilities built before 1986 to have detectable levels of lead because they are more likely to have been built using lead pipes. The Arnold AFB water chemistry lab is EPA certified to analyze drinking water. Immediately following the high results, a technical team sampled 100 percent of all drinking fountains, ice machines and food preparation sinks for lead. Sources with high lead rates were immediately removed from service. Additionally, water coolers identified for having lead components and those in industrial areas were removed from service. All of the replacement coolers have been installed.

If you are concerned about lead in water sources at your home, contact your local water provider or visit EPA's website at www.epa.gov/lead to find out how to get tested for lead.

For further protection of our drinking water, equipment for corrosion control treatment is being installed. Corrosion control treatments will begin after the beginning of the year. Optimal Corrosion Control Treatment includes techniques such

as pH adjustment and the addition of corrosion inhibitors that promote the formation of insoluble scales that prevent lead and copper from leaching from pipes into the drinking water. AEDC Bioenvironmental Engineering expects to see results of this treatment in future lead testing.

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation has assigned 20 specific sampling sites which will be tested every six months until Arnold AFB can demonstrate repeatable results below the established action levels. Bi-weekly water quality parameter samples (pH, alkalinity, calcium, conductivity, temperature, and in the future corrosion inhibitors) continue every two weeks. Results are submitted to the TDEC.

For more information call the water utility at 931-454-6066 or Bioenvironmental Engineering at 931-454-5351.

For Your Information

According to the EPA, lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources, and will affect individuals differently.

Lead can cause damage to the brain and kidneys, and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body.

The greatest risk of lead exposure is to infants, young children, and pregnant women. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children.

Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults.

Lead is stored in the bones, and it can be released later in life.

During pregnancy, the child receives lead from the mother's bones, which may affect brain development. The consumer can reduce their exposure to lead in drinking water by the following:

1. Run the cold water 15 to 30 seconds to flush out the water in the faucet body and home plumbing. This is the source of lead in almost all drinking water from a home tap.
1. Drink and cook with cold water only, do not use hot water for preparing baby formula.
2. Please note that boiling water does not reduce lead levels.

Lead is a common metal found in the environment.

Lead can also enter drinking water when service pipes that contain lead corrode, especially where the water has high acidity or low mineral content that corrodes pipes and fixtures. The most common problem is with brass or chrome-plated brass faucets and

fixtures with lead solder, from which significant amounts of lead can enter into the water, especially hot water.

The MCLG, or maximum contaminant level goal for lead is zero mg/L. It is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health.

MCLGs allow for a margin of safety. The action level for lead is 0.015 mg/L. It is the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

For media-related questions contact AEDC Public Affairs at 931-454-4204.

Screening process in place before entry into Arnold AFB

By Deidre Moon
AEDC Public Affairs

A screening process has been employed for authorizing entry to Arnold Air Force Base to ensure the health of Arnold Engineering Development Complex personnel during the novel coronavirus disease, or COVID-19, pandemic.

The screening procedures began March 21 and continue to be modified as necessary. As of April 6, only employees involved in executing operationally urgent operations are allowed to enter the base.

Ray Kelly, Chief of the Security Forces Office at Arnold, is working closely with Contract Security Lead Kevin Holton and his team and stated that he appreciates the team’s positive attitude throughout this tumultuous time.

“They have done an amazing job remaining flexible to changing security requirements to keep the base safe,” he said.

In addition to having a limited workforce, other restrictions include:

- If an individual has tested positive or has had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- If an individual has developed a fever, cough or shortness of

breath.

- If an individual has been to a list of “hotspot” states outside of Tennessee or designated counties in Tennessee and neighboring states. An entire list can be found online at <https://www.arnold.af.mil/coronavirus/>.

In addition to asking personnel questions based on the above list, the security guards are using a no-touch ID card policy. The policy requires those entering the base to present their IDs to the guards to scan. The guards are also practicing social distancing as much as possible.

Kelly noted that there have been changes to the way base deliveries are being handled.

“Non-essential deliveries have been postponed for 30 days, and there have been additional screening measures put in place for essential deliveries like food and mission-specific equipment and supplies,” he said.

In light of these changes, Kelly applauds Contract Security’s efforts to protect the rest of the base.

“All of the contract security guards are doing a tremendous job remaining flexible to ever-changing processes and procedures from the supervisors on shift,



Arnold Air Force Base Contract Security personnel ask individuals entering the base a series of COVID-19 screening questions as a requirement to be allowed entry to the base March 23. The questions include if individuals have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive, locations of recent travel or if experiencing relevant symptoms. (U.S. Air Force photo by Jill Pickett)

security controllers in the Base Defense Operations Center, to the gate guards standing post,” he said. “Gene Mittuch (project manager for the Facility Support Services II contract), Kevin Holton, and the entire Security Contractor’s leadership team has been instrumental in executing the policies and procedures put forth by the AEDC Commander.

“I would like to ask the workforce to remain patient and flexible as there may be more changes to procedures depending on the length of this situation.”



Col. Charles Roberts, Chief of the Arnold Engineering Development Complex Test Support Division, observes Arnold Air Force Base Contractor Security personnel as they ask individuals entering the base a series of COVID-19 screening questions as a requirement to be allowed entry to the base March 23. The screening questions were implemented beginning March 21. Security falls under the Test Support Division. (U.S. Air Force photo by Jill Pickett) (This image was altered by obscuring badges for security purposes.)

Arnold FES taking measures to stay ready to respond in face of coronavirus

By Jill Pickett
AEDC Public Affairs

Arnold Air Force Base Fire and Emergency Services maintains a continual state of readiness to respond to situations on base and, when needed, provide mutual aid to departments off base.

In order to prevent, to the best of their ability, giving or getting the coronavirus to or from the co-workers they live with for 24 hours at a time or a patient in their care, FES team members are taking extra steps to stay ready to answer the call.

“We have taken all the

recommended actions, such as social distancing, not shaking hands, etc.,” said FES Deputy Chief Daryl VanCise. “We have also implemented touch-point cleaning of all surfaces and items at least twice per day.”

He added that all firefighters are having their temperature taken every 12 hours to check for a fever.

Measures have also been implemented to aid the firefighters in reducing risk when responding to calls.

Dispatchers at the Emergency Communications Center, or ECC, ask callers a set of

specific 911-call screening questions. They can then inform the responding firefighters to the potential of a COVID-19 situation. In such a case, VanCise explained, the crew uses “very specific response protocols aimed at minimizing crew exposure, while ensuring appropriate patient care is administered.”

The Tennessee Department of Health has oversight over the Arnold AFB FES ambulance service. The Department’s EMS Director has provided guidance concerning response, personal

protective equipment and decontamination procedures.

As the count of confirmed cases continues to grow and safety measures change, VanCise praised the entire FES team for their handling of the situation.

“All Arnold FES personnel, to include ECC dispatchers, firefighters, fire prevention specialists and management staff, have done an outstanding job implementing these new protocols and safety measures,” VanCise said. “Our goal is to provide appropriate emergency

medical care while keeping our FES personnel healthy and able to work.”

AEDC personnel are to call their doctor for guidance if they feel sick. In the case of serious illness, they

should call 911 and FES will respond. VanCise asks that individuals that are sick not be brought to the fire station, though, as it places the entire FES workforce at risk of infection.

Arnold AFB Warehouse ensures supplies flow onto base in spite of coronavirus

By Jill Pickett
AEDC Public Affairs

Sustaining operations at Arnold Air Force Base, headquarters for the Arnold Engineering Development Complex, even in a reduced capacity while in an “operationally urgent” posture due to the coronavirus, requires both people and the materials they require to carry out their jobs.

The Base Warehouse ensures those materials are received on Base and available for delivery to the workforce.

When the base posture changed April 6, the Warehouse reduced staffing in accordance with that directive, but to a level still allowing support of all the testing that was required to continue, base operations and other critical activities.

This required coordination with partners off base to slow the flow of goods.

“We notified all vendors, carriers and subcontractors of the change in base posture,” said Mike Ramsey, AEDC Test Operations and Sustainment Acquisitions Branch manager. “We asked them to hold non-critical orders and work and suspended other work.”

Ramsey noted this effort has been assisted by the other areas on base.

“All the areas out here working have been really good about identifying those shipments that are really needed and understanding that we are on limited-scope operations,” Ramsey said.

Even with reducing the incoming deliveries, the tempo for those remaining on the job has increased.

Some carriers are hauling mixed shipments of critical and non-critical items, and both are accepted when such a shipment arrives.

“While this adds to the workload on the reduced staff, we do want to keep suppliers paid and working,” Ramsey said. “We want to have materials available when we do return to normal operations.”

The health and safety of Warehouse employees continues to be a priority, with added measures to mitigate the risk the coronavirus poses.

A new Job Safety Analysis was written specifically for handling critical shipments being delivered by carriers from identified “hotspots.”

The Warehouse has been able to maintain the 6 feet of distance between people.

Hand sanitizer and wipes, though in high demand, has been provided.

“We received some hand sanitizer from local distilleries and Bechtel (parent company of TOS contractor, National Aerospace Solutions) provided some,” Ramsey said.

A focus area for those supplies is the receiving area, where employees are off loading supplies and may have interactions with carriers. The Warehouse has also been distributing it to other areas on base.

Overall, Ramsey was satisfied.

“I think it’s going well. The pace is of course fast, but we are able to manage it,” Ramsey said. “I think they (the Warehouse team) feel good about being able to continue to support the essential testing.”

CORONAVIRUS STANDARD PRECAUTIONS



Clean your hands often with soap and water and/or hand sanitizer.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.



Avoid close contact, putting distance between yourself and other people.



Stay home if you’re sick, except to get medical care.



Cover coughs and sneezes.



Wear a face mask if you are sick.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

National Aerospace Solutions donates supplies to local health department

By Bradley Hicks
NAS Public Affairs

To support the local fight against COVID-19, National Aerospace Solutions recently donated a large quantity of personal protection equipment to the Coffee County Health Department in Manchester. Bechtel, the parent company of NAS, has been providing disaster relief supplies from existing inventory at the Bechtel Equipment Operations center in Texas to company projects, such as NAS, located throughout the country. The supplies were provided to these company projects to serve as donations to local medical facilities and first responders. Leadership within NAS, the Test Operations and Sustainment contractor at

Arnold Air Force Base, worked with Bechtel Equipment Operations to secure multiple cases of N95 masks, nitrile gloves and coveralls in various sizes, spray bottles, disinfectants, toilet paper, paper towels and hand sanitizer. When NAS General Manager Dr. Rich Tighe learned NAS would be receiving the supplies, he tasked NAS Executive Officer Justin Garrard with finding out where they would be put to the best use. “As part of the AEDC Team, I’m very pleased that NAS and its parent company Bechtel can help medical providers in the local community in their work to combat COVID-19,” Tighe said. Garrard contacted the Coffee County Health

Department (CCHD), which is part of a 13-county COVID-19 response group. Health care facilities within this group have been sharing supplies. “When the CCHD found out NAS and Bechtel were donating that material, they were very grateful and said they would make sure it got to the best place, where it was needed,” Garrard said. As the PPE arrived, Garrard and fellow NAS employee Mike Hollowell delivered it to the health department over three days, making one delivery on April 2, one on April 8 and two deliveries on April 9. Each case of masks contained 10 masks, each case of gloves contained 100 gloves, each case of coveralls contained 25 pairs, each case of toilet paper contained 96

rolls, and each case of paper towels contained 30 rolls. The health department received multiple cases of each of these items, as well as multiple cases of the sanitizer and disinfectants. In all, Bechtel Equipment Operations shipped 1,358 pounds in disaster relief items to NAS for donation to the CCHD. Garrard said those at the CCHD were very appreciative of the donation. “They were extremely grateful,” he said. “They said, ‘I’d give you a hug, but we’ve got to social distance.’” Madison Toney, assessment and planning coordinator and public information officer for the Tennessee Department of Health South Central Regional Office, said those at the CCHD and the TDH regional

office wished to express their “sincerest thanks” for the PPE provided by NAS. “The donated masks and gloves will continue to help to protect not only our staff in the health departments but also our patients and community members that we assess and treat,” she said. “We are working diligently to slow the spread of COVID-19 and appreciate the support from local community members and agencies. “We would also like to thank the Arnold Air Force Base and all of the community members for all of your hard work and dedication in following the recommended ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19. With all of us working together to protect ourselves and our fellow community members, we will slow the spread and lessen the effects of COVID-19.”

COMMANDER from page 1

Geraghty said the posture implemented April 6 enhances the screening measures put in place March 21, helping to ensure mission-critical personnel residing or commuting from hotspot areas do not pose an increased exposure risk to others on base. “This new posture that was effective Monday was designed in large part to cut down, to a great extent, the number of people who are going to come on base and interact with each other. I think it’s been effective based on what I’ve seen this week,” Geraghty said. “There are many fewer people supporting the mission on base this week,

which significantly reduces the possibility of the transmission of this disease.” Geraghty said the base restriction policy is strong and that Arnold leaders were proactive in their measures to protect base personnel. “As long ago as Feb. 28, we had already convened the Public Health Working Group and were figuring out ways to mitigate the threat,” Geraghty said. “Before a lot of people were even really taking this seriously, our team at AEDC was figuring out how to protect the health of the workforce right away.” To provide further protection, if a member of the workforce

tests positive, the area in which that individual works will, if possible, be cordoned off to give the virus time to die. The area will also be cleaned in accordance with Center for Disease Control guidelines, Geraghty said. Military personnel at Arnold AFB are required to wear cloth face masks at all times, and Geraghty said he strongly encourages the mission essential Department of Defense civilians and contractors still working on base to do the same. Those testing positive or self-isolating must obtain doctor clearance and go 14 days without exhibiting symptoms before being allowed base access.

Geraghty said there are no plans to close the Base Exchange or Commissary at this time. However, he said base leaders will take actions as required to protect the workforce. “If the counties surrounding us can continue to contain the threat and these stay-at-home policies continue to work, we will be able to remain in our current posture until the threat subsides,” he said. Geraghty said he is looking forward to the return of business as usual at Arnold. Although the base remains in a state of risk mitigation, Geraghty said the Arnold leadership team is thinking ahead on how to return

the base to a state of normal operations once the COVID-19 threat has diminished. “The leadership team is actively planning right now for the moment when the threat subsides to enough of a degree that we can start to reinstate as many of the elements of the mission as we can,” he said. “The leadership team is thinking it through with this basic simple question – ‘How quickly and how soon could we safely get back to doing the mission to the full degree?’” The town hall may be viewed at <https://www.facebook.com/AEDCCommander/videos/3363188177065432/>.

DONATIONS from page 1

“I would like to point out that there wasn’t even a request for the masks. People heard about the requirement to wear face coverings on base and they started offering assistance. To me, that is awesome.” A donation of 50 cloth masks came from a retired member of the military. Twenty-eight cloth masks were made and donated April 10 for commissary patrons by a pair of the Air Force’s very own youth. All 28 masks were used by patrons within the first hour of business. Hearing this, the youth sewed 19 more and donated them to the Commissary and Base Exchange on April 11. AEDC Test Operations Division Chief Col. Keith Roessig’s daughters, Karina and Kolleen, learned about an effort called the Million Mask Challenge from one of their former Girl Scout leaders. “We were looking at the Million Mask Challenge and Med Threads Facebook pages and thought it was a really great way to help our community,” said eighth-grader Karina. They started with making masks for a nursing home in Tullahoma. They then made them for children living in Arnold Village, the on-base housing. After that, they learned of Geraghty’s directive that all military members wear a cloth mask “when on base in spaces where even transient incursion of the 6-foot bubble is likely.” So they added making masks, in the permitted colors, for the military members to their list. Base Exchange and the Commissary patrons were added to their list, after hearing of the directive for wearing masks while in those facilities.



Reusable cloth face masks made by Karina and Kolleen Roessig. The sisters are making the masks and donating them to help combat the spread of the coronavirus. (Courtesy photo)

“It feels good to know that I’m doing something productive and helping people stay safe,” said sixth-grader Kolleen. The pair began sewing the masks April 2 and had made 101 masks as of April 10. They have been making 15-20 a day with plans to make 200 total. Their next recipients will be overseas military communities in Qatar and Japan that reached out through the Million Mask Challenge to request masks for their communities. The girls have pledged 30 masks to each community. The effort is also their Girl Scout Silver Award project. If

you would like to join their effort, the pattern they are using is posted on the AEDC/Arnold Spouse Facebook page. “I love the fact that they see a need in their community and are helping to address it; and actually getting to see the impact in the community in real time,” said Kristeen Roessig, their mother. It is important to note that using a cloth mask is not intended to prevent the wearer from getting sick, but may help prevent the spread of the virus from the wearer to others. The need for primary mitigation efforts, including social distancing, is not eliminated by wearing a mask.



Kolleen, left, and Karina Roessig stand next to the bin of free face masks at the Arnold Air Force Commissary. Arnold Engineering Development Complex Commander Col. Jeffrey Geraghty, in line with the Defense Commissary Agency’s guidance, issued a directive that effective April 10 all Base Exchange and Commissary patrons must wear face coverings while in the facilities. The donated masks include ones made by the Roessig sisters. (Courtesy photo)

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Arnold AFB, Tenn.

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Arnold Legal Office commemorates National Crime Victims’ Rights Week

By Leslie McGowan
Arnold AFB Legal Office

Arnold Legal Office (AEDC/JA), in commemoration of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week (NCVRW), April 19–25, plans to host a very special training event to meet our Special Victims Counsel and Paralegal to raise awareness about crime victims’ issues and rights and introduce the community to the important resources and services available. According to the most recent

National Crime Victimization Survey from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, about 3.3 million Americans age 12 or older were victims of violent crime in 2018. AEDC/JA will commemorate the advancement of victims’ rights and highlight issues surrounding victimization by holding a training event presented by the Special Victims Counsel (SVC) May 8 at 1 p.m. in the Commander’s Conference Room. The Judge Advocate’s office

is honoring Capt. Janessa Brito, (SVC), and Staff Sgt. Ryan Fleming, (SVP), who are our champions coming from Scott Air Force base assigned to AEDC/JA in advocating for expanded support and services for communities affected by crime, specifically sexual assault. The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) leads communities throughout the country in their annual observances of NCVRW by promoting victims’ rights and honoring crime victims and

those who advocate on their behalf. This year’s theme –Seek Justice | Ensure Victims’ Rights | Inspire Hope –recognizes the individuals and groups whose advocacy has propelled the victims’ rights movement forward for the past half century, inspiring in victims and their loved ones a feeling of hope for progress, justice and healing. OVC and the legal office encourage participation in victim-related observances throughout the year.

OVC hosts the annual National Crime Victims’ Service Awards Ceremony in Washington, D.C., to honor outstanding individuals and programs that serve victims of crime. For additional information about this year’s NCVRW and how to assist victims in your own community, please contact the Arnold AFB Legal Office at 931-454-7814. For additional ideas on how to support victims of crime, visit OVC’s website at www.ovc.gov.


NAS participates in Small Business Industry Day in Nashville

By Deidre Moon
NAS Public Affairs

Acquisition Team members with National Aerospace Solutions, LLC, the Arnold Engineering Development Complex Test Operations and Sustainment contractor at Arnold Air Force Base, attended the 2020 Small Business Industry Day on March 5 at Tennessee State University in Nashville. Cindy Dixon, a subcontract administrator and small business advocate, with the help of Meron Agonafir and Frances Samples, both negotiated buyers, manned the NAS exhibit at the event, which was hosted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. “As always, the event was a success,” Dixon said. “We were able to meet with over 50 vendors in one or more of the socio-economic categories, capable of providing services and products that NAS acquires.” The NAS Acquisition team regularly attends Industry Day events to help educate area suppliers and subcontractors interested in conducting business with the company.



On March 5, Meron Agonafir and Frances Samples, negotiated buyers, with National Aerospace Solutions, LLC, the AEDC Test Operations and Sustainment contractor at Arnold Air Force Base, speak to an interested vendor during the 2020 Small Business Industry Day at Tennessee State University in Nashville. NAS Acquisition team members attended the event to share information about the company with small business vendors. (Courtesy photo)



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Arnold Lakeside Center
Gossick Leadership Center
Wingo Inn
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Barber Shop
Food Trucks
Outdoor Recreation (includes
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Ridge, and Crockett Cove)**



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