

Greening the Department of Defense, Base by Base

The Fort Leonard Wood Army Base in Missouri is making large strides to support the use of alternative fuels in the Department of Defense. The installation was the first Army installation to utilize both biodiesel and ethanol, according to Keith G. Bax, Motor Transport Officer.

“In over two and a half years of use there have not been any B20 related maintenance issues,” said Bax. Of the 1,113 total fleet vehicles fueled at the Transportation Motor Pool (TMP), 734 vehicles use alternative fuel, or 66 percent of the fleet, he said.

The TMP of the Directorate of Logistics-Transportation Division uses the alternative fuels in all of the diesel fuel vehicles and Flexible Fuel Vehicles leased from the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). Since opening biodiesel (B20) and ethanol (E85) fueling stations in March 2003, Fort Leonard Wood has issued over 430,000 gallons of biodiesel and 140,000 gallons of E85. In the last year alone, the base used 185,000 gallons of B20.

Fort Leonard Wood started by testing biodiesel in the pool of 312 non-deployable, school-house tactical vehicles in 2003. The test plan monitored and evaluated B20 in over 70 light High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV). “It should be noted that even during extreme cold temperatures the test HMMWVs started and operated equal to and sometimes better than HMMWVs operating on regular diesel fuel,” said Bax.

The vehicles were switched back and forth between regular diesel and B20. “Vehicle operation and maintenance requirements were not affected by this action,” he said. “We now use B20 in 425 diesel burning tactical vehicles that are used in the Military Police and Chemical Schools Consolidated Equipment Pool. These vehicles range in size from a light HMMWV to 5-ton trucks. We are leading the transition to alternative fuels for the Army.”