



**SOUTH BAY  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CENTER**

**South Bay Cities Council of Governments**  
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## **Environmental Sustainability at Los Angeles Air Force Base**

**By Lt. Col. Todd Inouye of Los Angeles Air Force Base**

Some may not realize there is a major active duty Air Force base in the city of Los Angeles. In fact, it's located in the South Bay with areas in both El Segundo and San Pedro. Los Angeles Air Force Base (LAAFB) accomplishes an extremely critical mission for our nation's security as the single center for acquisition and development of space and missile systems. Along with that mission, LAAFB is making great achievements in sustainability and resource conservation.

One of the biggest projects at LAAFB, and an important stepping stone towards promoting sustainability and green activities, is to produce renewable energy, reduce consumption of resources, and to minimize materials entering the waste stream. Activities such as these also reduce pollution and save taxpayer money. Many programs are already in effect or will soon be implemented throughout the installation, like the use of electric and hybrid government vehicles, water conservation through drought tolerant landscaping, water efficient bathroom products, food diversion and new recycling capabilities.

Saving energy is challenging as technology keeps advancing, but LAAFB has achieved great success in reducing its energy bill through photovoltaic (PV) panels. LAAFB has installed PV panels over parking canopies on the base and recently on top of their largest three buildings. These PV panels were a major acquisition to increase sustainability and support green efforts on the base. Thus far, LAAFB has installed a total of 3,500 PV panels, with future projects to include an additional 6,000 in various locations throughout the base. The energy produced by PV panels is enough to operate the base's Fitness Center and Clinic, effectively powering these facilities for "free." There is also an environmentally friendly aspect since no greenhouse gases are produced.

LAAFB is also making constant efforts to reduce electricity consumption. For example, the base replaced 12,000 32-watt fluorescent light bulbs with 28-watt bulbs. Although the change is only 4-watts per bulb, when multiplied by 12,000 bulbs the base saves roughly 180,000 kilowatt-hours or \$57,000 per year.

One of LAAFB's biggest sustainable success stories is water conservation. In 2013, the base's average water consumption was reduced by a whopping 45% compared to consumption in 2007. LAAFB is also avoiding the use of precious drinkable water as much as possible. All grass around the base in El Segundo is now irrigated with reclaimed water. Reclaimed water is also used for flushing toilets and urinals. Through the use of reclaimed water, the base saves 12 million gallons of drinkable water per year within the state of California, saving \$70,000 annually. The base has also reduced irrigation requirements through the installation of irrigation controls and xeriscaping (drought-tolerant landscaping).

In 2011, a Presidential Memorandum was issued mandating that all new light-duty vehicles be alternatively fueled by 2015. LAAFB has been selected as one of the few installations in the Department of Defense to demonstrate new electric and hybrid vehicle technology. LAAFB is in the process of converting its government vehicles to either 100% electric or hybrid. To support the vehicles, charging stations are being installed on base. A new technology is also being tested called Vehicle-To-Grid (V2G). The basic idea of V2G is to be able to return excess energy stored in vehicles back to the electrical grid during times of peak demand.

Along with the benefits of reducing consumption of resources, saving costs and environmental stewardship, LAAFB has been recognized with Air Force level awards. In 2012, LAAFB won the General Thomas D. White Award for Best Environmental Sustainability Team in the Air Force.

LAAFB is deeply committed to sustainability and conserving resources. The base also recognizes its role in the greater Los Angeles community to be a good and responsible steward and neighbor both now and into the future.

For any questions, please direct them to the following email address:  
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