

***GTA 05-08-004**

**THE SOLDIER AND THE ENVIRONMENT:
Soldier's Environmental Ethic
and Responsibility Card**

*A Soldier's guide to responsible conduct for respecting
America's natural resources.*



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INTRODUCTION

Environmental protection remains a major concern to Americans and to the Army. Over the past couple of generations, we have realized that we must protect our natural resources if we are to pass this heritage on to our children and grandchildren. Army commanders will not tolerate a lack of concern toward protecting the land, air, and water resources “loaned” to the Army by Americans, our allies, or host nations. We have also learned that simply complying with environmental regulations may not ensure that we are able to sustain our mission.

“The new Army Strategy for the Environment: ‘Sustain the Mission—Secure the Future’ establishes a long-range vision that enables the Army to meet its mission today and into the future. Sustainability is the foundation for this strategy...”

*—General Peter J. Schoomaker
Army Chief of Staff*

“Foster an ethic within the Army that takes us beyond environmental compliance to sustainability.”

—Army Strategy for the Environment

PURPOSES OF THE STRATEGY

The following long-term goals will guide the Army strategy into the future:

- Foster a sustainability ethic.
- Strengthen Army operations.

- Meet test, training, and mission requirements.
- Minimize impacts and total ownership costs.
- Enhance well-being.
- Drive innovation.

SUSTAINABILITY IS KEYSTONE

The Army's environmental strategy represents a change in Army thinking. It represents a major advancement in the Army's appreciation of the interdependence between our mission, the community, and the environment. A sustainable Army simultaneously meets current and future mission requirements worldwide, safeguards human health, improves the quality of life, and enhances the natural environment.

It is our obligation to ensure that today's Soldiers—and future Soldiers—have the land, water, and air resources needed in which to train; a healthy environment in which to live; and the support of local communities and Americans.

SOLDIERS AND THE ARMY'S ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY

As a Soldier, you fit into the Army's environmental program by—

- Realizing that it is your personal and professional responsibility to support the Army's environmental ethic in garrison and full spectrum operations.
- Performing tasks in compliance with your unit environmental standing operating procedures (SOPs).
- Asking yourself before you perform the tasks, "What will be the effect on the environment?"

- Using common sense in the absence of instruction from the chain of command to determine right from wrong as it pertains to the environment.
- Supporting installation and unit recycling programs.
- Taking the Army's environmental strategy to heart while performing your job, while off-duty, and while living in family housing.

P2: A KEY COMPONENT FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Pollution prevention (P2) is defined as “preventing waste from being generated in the first place,” and all pollution is waste. You can prevent pollution by—

- Performing your job carefully. Small drips accumulate to pollute streams, lakes, and local drinking water sources. Use only the amount of hazardous material (HM) necessary to do a job—any more creates unnecessary hazardous waste (HW).
- Reusing items instead of discarding them. Use both sides of notepaper instead of only one side. Reuse cleaning products, rags, and absorbents to clean spills. Check with other units to see if they have a use for any unneeded items.
- Recycling HM such as solvents and coolants. Return used parts and assemblies to the supply facility for rebuilding or recycling. Participate in installation and unit recycling programs.

You can show more initiative and reduce pollution by—

- Turning off unneeded power-consuming devices.
- Preventing spills by observing safe working practices.
- Responding properly to spills in the workplace.

- Using drip pans to contain fluid leaks from equipment.
- Selecting products that have refillable containers.
- Selecting recycled products when possible.
- Recycling items (paper, aluminum cans, batteries, pavement, scrap metal) in the workplace and at home.
- Purchasing products that are easily recycled.

You can be involved in P2 activities without even being aware of it. P2 may already be “built in” as part of your job routine. Recommendations for changes in a process or in materials used that led to reduced pollution have been made by Soldiers in the past. Changes in your work may have already been identified. When changes like these are approved, they make everyone’s job easier and save money.

If you have recommendations on how to prevent pollution, submit them through your chain of command. The recommendations might involve—

- Substituting a nonpolluting product for a hazardous one.
- Using a different cleaning process, such as mechanical versus chemical.
- Filtering and reusing a solvent cleaner.
- Prolonging the life of a lubricant through enhanced filtering.
- Procuring a substitute product that eliminates the need for one currently being used.



CONSIDERATIONS

Handling and Spills

You must receive special training before working with HM or HW. The training enables you to handle, properly store, and accumulate these products and to respond to spills according to the requirements of your workplace. When using chemicals, petroleum, oil, or lubricants, carefully follow your leader's instructions and unit SOPs. Without special training, your only response to spills should be to protect yourself, warn others, and report the spill through your chain of command.

Incidents

If you witness a spill or other environmental damage, immediately report the *who, what, when, where, why, and how* through your chain of command.

Training

General environmental awareness has been integrated into professional development courses. For special training requirements and important local considerations, consult your unit environmental officer and chain of command.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

It is recommended that you read FM 3-100.4 (soon to be superseded by FM 3-34.500) and AR 200-1 for additional information.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Unit environmental officer: _____

Installation environmental office: _____

Range control: _____