

NCA ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

1. REASON FOR ISSUE: This Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration (NCA) Directive establishes NCA's Environmental Management Program policies and procedures.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/CHANGES: This directive establishes standards for the Environmental Management Program and clarifies NCA policy when performing environmental management activities and responsibilities.

3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: National Cemetery Administration, Design and Construction Service, 425 Eye Street NW, Washington, DC 20001, is responsible for the contents of this directive. Questions may be referred to the NCA Environmental Engineer.

4. RELATED PUBLICATIONS:

a. Executive Order 13693, "Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade", March 19, 2015.

b. The Federal Leadership in High Performance and Sustainable Buildings Memorandum of Understanding, January 24, 2006.

c. VA Directive 0057– VA Environmental Management Program, January 15, 2010.

d. VA Directive 0058 and Handbook 0058 – Green Purchasing Program, July 19, 2013.

e. VA Directive 0059 and Handbook 0059 - Chemicals Management and Pollution Prevention, May 25, 2012.

f. VA Directive 0062 and Handbook 0062 - Environmental Compliance Management, January 10, 2012.

g. VA Directive 0063 and Handbook 0063- Waste Prevention and Recycling Program, October 17, 2011.

h. VA Directive 0064 and Handbook 0064 - Environmental Management Systems, January 10, 2012.

5. RESCISSIONS: This directive will replace NCA Notice 2011-001 (January 21, 2011).

March 26, 2019

NCA DIRECTIVE 0057

6. RECERTIFICATION: This document is scheduled for recertification on or before March 26, 2024.

/s/
Randy Reeves
Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs

Distribution: Electronic

NCA ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE/AUTHORITY: This directive establishes NCA's Environmental Management Program, a unified policy to require consistent compliance with Federal, State, and local environmental laws, regulations and guidance. Publishing this directive will help raise awareness of the need to comply with these requirements as part of NCA's operations. Increased awareness of the requirements and how to comply will help limit NCA's and VA's risk of violating environmental laws.

2. BACKGROUND: NCA is implementing a program that will improve operations and maintenance processes to minimize impacts to the environment by operating and conducting business in a sustainable manner. This program will also promote pollution prevention and compliance with all applicable legal requirements pertaining to the protection of human health and the environment.

The NCA Environmental Management Program consists of a functional organizational structure; comprehensive planning activities; defined responsibilities; and established practices, procedures, and processes to address NCA's particular responsibilities. The NCA Environmental Management Program provides the basis for developing, implementing, achieving, reviewing and maintaining the organization's environmental policy. This Program also enables NCA to monitor and assess the effectiveness of environmental protection measures and better demonstrate environmental compliance at cemeteries in states that have more stringent environmental standards due to having federal delegated authority under certain environmental statutes. The NCA Environmental Management Program will facilitate compliance with Federal, State, and local environmental laws, regulations and requirements minimizing the environmental impact of our operations through regular evaluation, use of natural resources and pollution prevention practices.

3. POLICY: It is NCA policy to conduct cemetery operational activities and programs in an environmentally sustainable manner that fully protects human health and the environment. NCA also evaluate and review annually progress made in achieving environmental compliance at national cemeteries administered by NCA.

The major components of this policy are:

a. **Green Purchasing.** Environmental Sustainability will be considered when acquiring goods and services; therefore, NCA will prefer acquisition of environmentally preferable goods and services.

b. **Chemical Management and Pollution Prevention.** NCA will reduce or eliminate the quantity of toxic and hazardous chemicals and materials acquired, generated, used, or disposed.

c. **Electronics Stewardship.** NCA will acquire Energy Star labeled products and Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) - registered electronic products, if possible when managing NCA's electronic assets. NCA will use power management and EnergyStar features on its electronic assets. NCA will establish and implement policies and procedures to extend the useful life of electronic equipment and use environmentally sound practices with respect to the final disposition of electronic equipment that has reached the end of its useful life.

d. **Environmental Compliance.** NCA will comply with the requirements of applicable Federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations and authorities.

e. **Waste Prevention and Recycling.** NCA will reduce, reuse, and recycle materials and waste wherever possible and practical, and maintain life-cycle cost-effective waste prevention and recycling programs.

f. **Energy and Water Conservation.** NCA will follow all VA Energy and Water guidance as directed through Office of Assets Enterprise Management.

g. **Management Tools.** NCA will employ management tools to implement the policies set forth in this directive.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. **Deputy Under Secretary for Field Programs and Cemetery Operations is responsible for:**

(1) Promoting environmental protection and compliance with environmental regulations as a priority for NCA cemetery staff; and

(2) Requesting resources for environmental compliance at NCA National Cemeteries.

b. **Deputy Under Secretary for Management is responsible for:**

(1) Establishing cemetery-wide environmental stewardship standards.

(2) Assigning NCA staff responsible for implementation of the Environmental Management Program;

(3) Planning for and providing financial resources necessary to implement the NCA Environmental Management Program;

(4) Reviewing and approving the annual NCA Environmental Management Program Report to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness;

(5) Appointing Central Office personnel necessary to administer the NCA Environmental Management Program; and

(6) Establishing overall policy and guidelines to implement NCA's Environmental Management Program.

c. Director, Design and Construction Service is responsible for:

(1) Refining federal environmental standards and practices at national cemeteries to accomplish full environmental compliance;

(2) Conducting environmental compliance audits and reporting the audit results to management;

(3) Investigating environmental non-compliance issues and initiating corrective actions;

(4) Acting as the NCA Point-of-Contact with environmental regulatory agencies;

(5) Assisting cemeteries subject to additional state or local environmental requirements with, developing mitigation plans and analyzing and recommending appropriate environmental responses;

(6) Assisting cemeteries in determining methods of compliance with Federal and state environmental laws; and

(7) Reviewing the annual Environmental Management Program report and recommending measures to improve environmental management at NCA facilities.

d. District Executive Directors are responsible for:

(1) Analyzing environmental performance objectives and measures through review of environmental audits, self-audits, and data from their District National Cemeteries;

(2) Assigning environmental performance goals for their District cemeteries; and

(3) Designating and maintaining environmental protection practices; performance measures, regulatory compliance and corrective actions implemented in cemeteries in their Districts.

(4) Designating a District EMS Coordinator who will be the liaison between the VACO EMS Coordinator and the Cemetery EMS Coordinators in their District.

e. Cemetery Directors are responsible for:

(1) Maintaining a work environment that prioritizes environmental protection, and environmental compliance;

(2) Planning, allocating, and managing resources (human, financial, technological, and specialized skills) essential to implementing and controlling the Environmental Management Program;

(3) Suspending cemetery staff and contractor work activities where there is imminent danger to the environment in accordance with federal environmental regulations;

(4) Designating and overseeing the Cemetery EMS Coordinator; and

(5) Coordinating with and informing the NCA Environmental Engineer of any environmental protection or compliance issues.

f. Cemetery EMS Coordinators are responsible for:

(1) Coordinating implementation of EMS requirements at national cemeteries and assisting staff and contractors with EMS protocols;

(2) Coordinating environmental training for employees, volunteers and contractors and distributing any required information associated with their activities;

(3) Assisting cemetery directors with EMS implementation, environmental protection practices and regulatory compliance requirements;

(4) Monitoring and confirming that NCA cemetery staff comply with environmental policy, procedures and EMS requirements;

(5) Monitoring and confirming that NCA contractors comply with EMS requirements, resource conservation, pollution prevention, and waste minimization; and

(6) Reporting environmental protection or compliance issues to the Cemetery Director.

5. REFERENCES

a. Executive Order 13693, "Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade", dated March 15, 2015.

b. The Federal Leadership in High Performance and Sustainable Buildings Memorandum of Understanding, January 24, 2006.

- c. ISO 14001:2015(E) International Standard on Environmental Management Systems, March 1, 2015.
- d. Clean Air Act of 1970, as amended, (CAA) (42 U.S.C. § 7401 et seq.).
- e. Clean Water Act of 1977 (CWA) (33U.S.C. § 1251 et seq.).
- f. Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986 (EPCRA) (42 U.S.C. 11011 et seq.).
- g. Federal Acquisition Regulations Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulations.
- h. Memorandum of Understanding – Promoting Sustainable Environmental Stewardship of Federal Electronic Assets (2004).
- i. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et. seq.).
- j. Pollution Prevention Act of 1990 (PPA) (42 U.S.C. §§13101-13109).
- k. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA) (42 U.S.C § 321 et seq.).
- l. Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 (SDWA) (42 U.S.C. § 300f et seq.).
- m. Toxic Substance Control Act of 1976 (42 U.S.C. § 2601 et seq.).
- n. VA NEPA implementing regulation (38 CFR Part 26).

6. Definitions

a. **Environmental Management System (EMS).** EMS is a set of processes and practices that enable an organization to increase its operating efficiency, continually improve overall environmental performance and better manage and reduce its environmental impacts. Included are those environmental aspects related to energy and transportation functions. Environmental management System implementation reflects accepted quality management principles based on the ISO 14001:2004(E) International Standard.

b. **Sustainable.** A means of creating and maintaining conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic, environmental, and other requirements of present and future generations.