



NEWS RELEASE

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Fort Bliss energy savings project nearly complete

By Debra Valine

An energy savings performance contract project started in January 2009 at Fort Bliss, Texas, is nearing completion.

As of Oct. 8, the project was 82 percent complete with an expected completion date of Jan. 31, 2011.

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, the Corps of Engineers' ESPC directory of expertise, partnered with Fort Bliss Directorate of Public Works and Johnson Controls Inc. on the \$9.5 million project that encompasses 10 different energy conservation measures.

"The project will provide various infrastructure upgrades and energy savings improvements," said Will Irby, the Huntsville Center project manager. "Huntsville Center works with the contractor and the installation DPW, who provides quality assurance and quality control on site."

The projects include upgrades to energy efficient lighting and lighting occupancy sensors; replacing 61 electric motors; upgrading utility monitoring and control systems; installing thermal wall insulation, solar thermal systems, a solar cooling and solar domestic hot water system, and a ground-mounted solar photovoltaic system; and replacing a reciprocating chiller and water heating systems.

The annual cost savings from these improvements is expected to be nearly \$1.2 million.

ESPCs provide private party financing for energy conservation measures at Army installations. The contractor provides capital and expertise to make infrastructure energy improvements on government facilities that significantly reduce Army energy utilization and costs, and the contractor maintains the improvements in exchange for a portion of the generated savings.

"The simple payback on the initial investment is expected to take about eight years," Irby said.

"ESPC helps us fund important energy savings projects through the saving of energy," said Gene Curtiss, engineering technician, with the Fort Bliss DPW's Buildings Operation and Command Center. "Projects that normally might be hard to fund otherwise can be done with this type of contract. This gives Fort Bliss DPW a future path and direction on what works and may not work for our future goals on energy savings projects. Many of the projects are just starting points on which Fort Bliss can build a much bigger platform on, in the future as well."

ESPC is a valuable tool available to installation DPWs as they strive to meet federal energy reduction goals of 30 percent energy and 15 percent water reduction by 2015.

“We are seeing dramatic changes in the effected buildings as far as energy usage goes,” Curtiss said. “Even with our BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) expansion, the savings to our energy bill are evident from the projects we have completed.

“The Fort Bliss DPW is very satisfied with the work being achieved through this type of energy savings contract,” Curtiss said. “The Corps of Engineers - Huntsville has been very helpful in giving Fort Bliss DPW the support we need to make this type of contract work smoothly and efficiently. The work done by the energy savings contractor has been well coordinated, and we at Fort Bliss are very happy with the quality of the equipment and the workmanship delivered with this product.

“Huntsville COE was and is the center of excellence in ESPC; I don't know where else we would go,” Curtiss said.

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