



# Commander, Navy Region Southwest NAVAL BASE SAN DIEGO, CA



## 2026 SECRETARY OF NAVY ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS Environmental Quality – Non-Industrial Installation Nomination

### INTRODUCTION

Naval Base San Diego (NBSD) consists of multiple campuses throughout the San Diego Metro Area. NBSD encompasses the NBSD complex, a three-mile stretch along Harbor Dr., one of San Diego's busiest thoroughfares, that is divided into three parts due to bisecting public roadways; the downtown San Diego Broadway Complex, where Commander, Navy Region Southwest (NRSW) and Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Southwest (NAVFACSW) reside; the Admiral Baker Golf Course and Recreation facilities; Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command San Diego; as well as 18 military-family housing neighborhoods, some with childcare and NEX services.

NBSD occupies approximately 1,600 acres of land and 326 acres of San Diego Bay, including 12 Piers and two channels- offering 56,000 feet of berthing. NBSD has an on-base population of over 35,000 military and civilian personnel, and 15,000 registered contractors supporting the Surface Navy's mission, making it the "Largest Employer in San Diego." The NBSD complex is divided into two distinct areas: the Wet-Side where the ships are moored along the waterfront, and the Dry-Side where most of the community facilities are located. NBSD is the principal homeport for the Pacific Fleet with more than 60 surface ships including ships from Military Sealift Command and the Maritime Administration. NBSD also supports mooring for visiting U.S. Coast Guard vessels and foreign military ships. With over 200 tenant commands, NBSD provides critical services to the Fleet, Fighter, and Family, including housing, security, public works, environmental, supply, and administrative facilities for tenant units.

San Diego is America's eighth largest city and is considered a hub for research and development companies, as well as a desirable locale for new and innovative start-up enterprises focused on biotechnology, telecommunications, and renewable energy. San Diegans take tremendous pride in their community and the local environment. In the spirit of community partnership, NBSD is a vigilant caretaker of its areas of responsibility, steadfast in compliance with environmental laws and regulations. NBSD has embraced this responsibility with an aggressive compliance oversight program and has developed cooperative working relationships with San Diego's elected officials and the regulatory community.

### BACKGROUND

**NBSD Environmental Program:** NBSD's Environmental Department's (NBSD EV) goal is to actively support the Fleet, Fighter, and Family through exceptional environmental stewardship and strong working relationships. The Commanding Officer of NBSD established an installation-specific environmental policy, which lists the environmental priorities unique to NBSD. The success of his policy goals can be found throughout the meticulous record keeping within NBSD's Environmental Management System (EMS). He has entrusted NBSD EV to not only manage NBSD EMS but to also oversee environmental regulatory compliance for all activities at the base.

NBSD EV personnel report to the Installation Environmental Program Director, who in turn reports to the NBSD Public Works Officer (PWO) for environmental compliance. NBSD EV is made up of a team of 9 subject matter experts (SME) addressing air quality, hazardous waste, water quality, program analysis, waterfront compliance, and environmental planning. NBSD EV prides itself on having its staff cross-trained in multiple medias, therefore producing a more synergistic approach in promoting compliance, establishing cost-efficiency measures, and inspiring enthusiasm for environmental protection.

NBSD consistently achieves its triennial policy goals by performing comprehensive environmental inspections, assessing projects for environmental implications, coordinating emergency environmental response, and providing education/training to installation personnel (active duty, civilian, contractor employees). NBSD EV manages over 160 environmental permits including: 73 San Diego Air Pollution Control Board (SDAPCD) permitted sites and/or equipment, 48 San Diego County Department of Environmental Health permitted hazardous waste (HW) collection sites, a Part B permitted RCRA Hazardous Waste Facility, a Conditionally Authorized Bilge and Oily Waste Treatment Facility, various underground storage tanks (USTs), 29 Moral Welfare and Recreation (MWR) and contractor Food Establishment Wastewater Discharge (FEWD) permits, Industrial Wastewater (IW) permits, and an installation-specific National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.

**Environmental Aspects and Challenges:** The most significant environmental aspects at NBSD are the implementation of new NPDES requirements for industrial stormwater areas, copper and zinc exceedances in storm drain discharges, and the regulation of ship repair operations, addressed via state and local programs by SDAPCD.

With an increase of ships and personnel now homeported at NBSD, compounded with increasingly stringent environmental requirements for both fleet and shore activities, NBSD overcame notable challenges during the award period. When faced with obstacles, NBSD rose to the challenge and exhibited unwavering support for shore readiness and the warfighters. NBSD EV Waterfront program provides frequent training to ships' force and contractors relating to all environmental media. During FY25, NBSD EV trained over 1000 Ships Forces personnel on waterfront compliance responsibilities, environmentally complaint ship preservation, and marine coating regulations. In addition, EV assisted in a May 16 briefing to CNSP and staff on compliant ship painting and preservation. NBSD's achievements during this time not only show its dedication to the Navy mission but also highlights a strong commitment to environmental stewardship.

**NBSD Environmental Management System (EMS):** NBSD completed its most recent Environmental Management System (EMS) external audit in August 2023, resulting in no major findings. NBSD recently closed out all compliance and minor Findings resulting in NBSD being the only EMS program in NAVFAC SW who has closed out ALL of their most recent EMS External Audit findings. NBSD was given Positive Observations including; Exceptional record keeping in the Air Quality program at all NEX Gas Stations. In addition, NBSD's EMS and NEPA programs were noted as "exemplary". The NBSD external audit determined that NBSD's EMS program is ISO 14001:2004 compliant and continues to remain in full conformance with EO 13423 and ISO 14001 in accordance with Department of War EMS policy.

## SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**Community Involvement:** NBSD has established working relationships with the City of National City, the City of San Diego, the Regional Chamber of Commerce, General Dynamics/ National Steel and Shipbuilding Company (NASSCO), Port of San Diego, San Diego Port Tenants Association, San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E), Navy League, San Diego Ship Repair Association, Armed Services YMCA (ASYMCA), and local community organizations. NBSD participates in common interest Stakeholder

Working Groups on multi-party environmental issues such as Chollas Creek Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and the San Diego Regional Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Permit.

NBSD has hosted San Diego and National City officials, as well as local environmental organizations, to illustrate the cooperative and positive aspects the Navy has provided the surrounding communities. Emphasizing its environmental stewardship as a *good neighbor* allows the Navy to build critical relationships and encourages dialogue in areas where cooperation between Navy and the community can work to the benefit of stakeholders.

NBSD's "Green Team", comprised of NBSD EV personnel, participate in numerous events throughout San Diego County to promote NBSD and DON environmental leadership. NBSD EV staffs public relations booths at San Diego metro environmental/community events, providing handouts and using displays to demonstrate the Navy's commitment to being a *good neighbor* and highlighting NBSD's positive impact on the environment. NBSD has also established quarterly cleanup events to beautify the neighboring communities and allow for waste to be properly disposed of. Large success has been seen in actively minimizing pollution to the environment. During this award period, events were as follows:

2025-09-26	Miramar Air Show
2025-05-23	Los Angeles Fleet Week
2025-04-22	NBSD Earth Day Base Cleanup
2024-11-11	San Diego Fleet Week
2024-11-1	NBSD Meet the Fleet Week
2024-10-23	NBSD Base Cleanup
2024-10-23	NBC Fall Beach Cleanup
2024-10-11	San Francisco Fleet Week
2024-09-27	Miramar Air Show
2024-09-21	Bailando in the Barrio
2024-08-24	Operation Clean Sweep
2024-08-19	Community Cleanup with the City of San Diego District 8
2024-07-08	Community Cleanup with National City
2024-05-26	Los Angeles Fleet Week
2024-05-20	Community Cleanup with the City of San Diego District 8
2024-05-18	2023 SANDAG Bike Anywhere Day
2024-04-21	NBSD Earth Day Cleanup
2024-02-25	Harbor Drive Community Cleanup
2023-11-04	National City Dia de los Muertos Festival
2023-10-9	NBSD Base Cleanup
2023-10-03	San Francisco Fleet Week

**AB 617**: Assembly Bill 617 (AB617) addresses the disproportionate impact of air pollution in Environmental (EJ) communities throughout California. The measure requires local air districts to take specific actions to reduce air pollution and toxic air contaminants from commercial and industrial sources with community air monitoring as a first step. One of the first EJ communities selected was the San Diego portside community including Barrio Logan, which borders NBSD and the local shipyards. A Portside Steering Committee meeting is held monthly, receiving updates from the SDAPCD on community air quality monitoring and emission reduction efforts. The committee also hears concerns from the public and other stakeholders and advises SDAPCD on appropriate courses of action. The committee is comprised of local community leaders, the Environmental Health Coalition (EHC), industry, Navy and other stakeholders. NBSD has worked closely with SDAPCD to support the AB617 San Diego Community Emission Reduction Plan (CERP)

through emission reduction analysis, the cold ironing of ships, and reductions of air emissions from vehicle traffic. As a result of NBSD's involvement and coordination with SDAPCD, SDAPCD is set to install an air monitoring station on NBSD. The air monitoring station data will greatly benefit the surrounding community and further support the Navy's narrative and goals of emission reduction.

**Naval Vessel Cold Ironing:** NBSD cold irons US Navy vessels that are homeported at the installation. This cold ironing is ships relying on ship-to-shore power and shutting down their main and auxiliary liquid fueled engines. NBSD is unique to the San Diego portside community, as the US Navy is the sole organization presently cold ironing in-port vessels. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that under certain circumstances, a vessel connected to shore power can reduce overall pollution emissions by up to 98% when drawing power from the regional grid. As an example, at NBSD cold ironing a littoral combat ship (LCS) for 1,000 hours means eliminating oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and diesel particulate matter (PM) emissions by approximately sixty-five and three tons, respectively. NRSW estimates 4,174 tons of NOx, 394 tons of SOx, 250 tons of CO, 75 tons of PM, and 69.5 tons of diesel PM are prevented annually via cold ironing the assigned NBSD fleet.

**Electrification Commitment:** NBSD has initiated a base-wide electric vehicle charging facilities project. NBSD utilized grant funding approved by the California Energy Commission for Navy and Marine Corps Electrification programs to install 10 level 2 Electric Vehicle chargers and 4 level 3 fast charging stations for both personal and government use as part of a pilot program that studies demand for such chargers on military installations. The first seven dual headed Level 2/3 electric vehicle charging stations are being operated for both government and personal vehicles. This pilot program highlights NBSDs steadfast commitment to exploring innovative sustainable practices through partnerships with agencies.

NBSD has successfully reduced vehicle emissions through diverse methods while supporting mission readiness. NBSD continues its support of the Federal Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), which offers public transportation and vanpool options at no cost or greatly reduced fares while reducing congestion in neighboring communities. The program is open to active duty, civilian, Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF), government contractors, and even foreign exchange military personnel, and promoted on the NBSD website as well as flyers around base.

Another method of reducing vehicle emissions that has shown great success and continues to grow is the shuttle bus program. NBSD recognized personnel movement requirements and implemented shuttle bus routes spanning the waterfront on base. NBSD has fifteen (15) shuttle stops in service with route schedules tailored to meet weekday and weekend demand. The program is open to everyone, including non-military contractors working on base.

A micro-grid project at NBSD is in development which will increase resiliency, provide electrical flexibility, and serve as a test bed for readily deployable, standardized micro-grid solutions. A combination of photovoltaic electrical generation, battery storage, and electric back-up systems will be installed at the NBSD Port Operations and Security building, which operates 24/7. Aside from reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and improved energy independence, this project serves as a test bed for an expandable, scalable blueprint that is can be accredited and deployed on an installation level scale.

**Developmental Studies:** NBSD participated in various Navy Environmental Sustainability Development to Integration (NESDI) program studies for bay water quality monitoring, Laser Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy sediment sampling, deployable in-pipe storm water treatment device, bioswale effectiveness and improvement study, in-situ automatic storm water sampling device for use at tidally influenced areas, flexible under-pier sediment assessment, and a background analysis and tracer study to identify metal contaminant source contributions to storm water runoff.

Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) worked with NBSD to introduce cutting edge research, including the In-Situ Toxicity Identification evaluation (iTIE) device to determine what chemicals drive impairments at contaminated sites, as well as the Signal Activated Bottom Lander (SABL) device that traps sediment to evaluate and characterize deposition of particulates to the sediment in relation to storm water monitoring and management. These studies, conducted at NBSD Paleta Creek, provided valuable information regarding emission impacts and effects on the surrounding environment.

**Storm Water Treatment Unit:** NBSD added influent sampling at all industrial storm water treatment units, including the NBSD Recycling Center and Piers 8, 10, and 12 to study BMP effectiveness. Results of the influent sampling are used to monitor the effectiveness of the treatment unit and identify when maintenance is needed. Monitoring treatment performance results show that the treatment units reduce metals in storm water runoff by roughly 51%. NBSD performed a study using past results and evaluated different types of treatment units to make improvements to the existing system. Based on the study, storm water sampling resources were used to retrofit the treatment units with the goal of increased pollutant reductions in storm water.

The Storm Water RX, Storm Water Treatment unit, installed at Pier 6, captures storm water runoff from Pier 6 and diverts the water into a filtration chamber where industrial work contaminants are contained. This unit was positively viewed during the Regional Water Quality Board's April 22 inspection.

**Drinking Water Compliance:** Beginning August 2024, NBSD performed its 5-year Lead in Priority Areas (LIPA) sampling of drinking water at the Child Development Centers, and Youth Program facilities within its area of responsibility. Every fixture at the subject facility was sampled. This effort included EV walkthroughs and interviews at each facility, development of sampling plans, and sampling outside normal hours. Fixtures testing beyond the screening level were removed from service and replaced when resampling showed the same results. During the cycle extensive outreach was conducted with staff and parents, appraising them regarding sample results and corrective actions. By April 2025 the process was completed, with a final notification sent out. In August 2026 NBSD will continue this process, sampling fixtures installed within the past year.

**Waste Reduction Efforts:** NBSD conducts regular cleanups of Chollas Creek, preventing trash from making its way into the San Diego Bay from upstream sources. The base collects everything from plastic bottles to tires and wooden crates, which gather behind the booms just a few hundred feet from the San Diego Bay. NBSD collaborated with and finalized an intergovernmental service agreement (IGSA) with the City of San Diego in June 2024, sharing the cost associated with cleaning Chollas and Paleta Creeks prior to their discharging into the bay following rain events. During this award period, NBSD collected over 320,000 lbs. of solid waste, preventing it entering the San Diego Bay. In March 2025 alone, 60,980 lbs. of trash were collected.

**Environmental Support:**

- NBSD EV provides environmental support seven days a week and conducts monthly, semi-annual, and annual inspections of NBSD permitted sites and/or equipment. Within this award period NBSD EV conducted over 9800 internal inspections and hosted 273 inspections and/or visits by local, state, or federal regulatory agencies.
- In FY24 and FY25, NBSD EV provided training to over 2000 active-duty sailors and civilians, from 35 tenant commands and activities, on EMS, hazardous waste management, spill prevention control and countermeasures (SPCC) plan, stormwater BMPs, waterfront compliance, and ships' force marine coating.

## **Other Noteworthy Environmental Management Accomplishments**

- NBSD successfully coordinated with the NBSD FEAD and contractor to submit and track all underground storage tank (UST) closure requirements with various regulatory agencies. The NEX 32<sup>nd</sup> Street Gas Station demolition project was completed ahead of schedule, which returned over \$187,000 back to the Government.
- NBSD identified ship's force operations as a critical area of emphasis for compliance. Extensive outreach is conducted on a regular basis where individual crews are briefed on the actions that will help ensure afloat units comply with local, state, and federal environmental regulations. These briefs emphasize that regulations apply to all parties involved in ship maintenance and give crews a sense of support from the installation and an understanding of what is needed from them. Frequent training, weekly inspections and constant vigilance on the Waterfront is the key to this, as compliance remains a challenge due to the rotating deck leadership on ships. EV staff has proven extremely adept at catching potential violations and getting them corrected by both contractors and sailors.
- NBSD implements Best Management Practices (BMP) for industrial storm water compliance to minimize or eliminate the discharge of pollutants into storm water runoff. The successful implementation of BMPs has reduced the frequency of NBSD Numeric Action Level (NAL) exceedances, returned three storm water parameters to baseline status, and mitigated storm water pollutants that enter the San Diego Bay, thereby redirecting the number of man-hours required to complete exceedance response actions. NBSD EV was able to reallocate over 80 man-hours toward other projects. These BMPs and their correct application are a key component of ship training.
- In coordination with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the Vesta Street bridge project study is underway at NBSD. The project will ultimately reduce impact on the neighboring Environmental Justice communities, as well as cut emissions by relieving traffic congestion, providing more efficient commercial vehicle access to interregional freeway networks, and improving goods movement.
- NBSD actively works to save and protect affected or injured wildlife on the installation, in conjunction with Project Wildlife, Sea World, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). While NBSD's primary natural resource area is the Admiral Baker Recreation Facility, its main installation is home to a respectable number of marine animals. Numerous Herons, and Egrets nest in several trees located near Public Works (Bldg. 121). San Diego Bay supports a large population of sea birds and marine mammals. EV's outreach and training includes educating personnel regarding these fellow inhabitants. Algae blooms within San Diego Bay produce a toxin known as domoic acid, which has a deleterious effect on wildlife. EV staff actively responds to these cases, rescuing and transporting affected animals.

## **Effective Use of Funds**

- Starting FY2020, NBSD EV initiated internal ship-assist visits to address marine coating requirements set forth by San Diego County Air Pollution Control District. This shift from contracted work to in-house efforts effectively saved the Department of Navy over \$15,000. During the most recent External EMS Audit, a "noteworthy practice" was recorded for the success of NBSD's Ships' Force Marine Coating Program. Onboard ship assistance and tracking of marine coating usage has proven to be a successful method for achieving and continuously improving this compliance challenge.
- Targeted approach to NPDES compliance. Performed a study on Standard Industrial Classification codes to accurately identify industrial facilities subject to increased NPDES monitoring requirements. The study resulted in a 54% reduction of facilities categorized as industrial and allows for efficient use of pollution prevention resources by focusing on facilities that pose a potentially increased threat to water quality.

- NBSD supports NBSD EV to obtain and maintain California International Code Council Designated Underground Storage Tank Operator (DUSTO) certification to train facility employees and conduct regular visual observations at the four underground storage tank (UST) facilities under NBSD's responsibility. This in-house inspection satisfies CA requirements and saves Department of Navy over \$10,000 per year in contracted support.

**National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Planning, Analysis, and Implementation:** The NBSD NEPA Program regularly attends Work Induction Board meetings and has created a spreadsheet that supports tracking the status and fate of each Record of CATEX and Record of Environmental Review developed, ensuring all signed documents were readily available for review. During this award period, over 150 CATEXs were reviewed.