DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS U.S. ARMY GARRISON
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FORT RUCKER AL 36362-1100

GC Policy Memo 25-21

AMIM-RPW-E (1)

23 JUL 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, U.S. Army Garrison and Tenant Units and Directorates, Fort Rucker, AL 36362

SUBJECT: Protecting the Environment from Aircraft Engine Shutdown

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to remind personnel of the current aircraft engine shutdown procedures established to protect the environment.

2. Each time aircraft engines are shutdown, unburned fuel is discharged and can cause soil and/or groundwater contamination that may be very expensive for the Army to clean up in the future. The amount of fuel released may seem negligible but considering the number of helicopter sorties flown at Fort Rucker, the cumulative effect of these discharges can result in significant environmental pollution.

3. In response to inquiries from several environmental groups, the Environmental and Natural Resources Division, Directorate of Public Works, conducted a study and prepared the report entitled Environmental Impact Study of Fuel Discharge during Helicopter Shutdown, Fort Rucker, Alabama. The study concluded that the hazards associated with individuals going beneath the helicopter to catch fuel or the use of an extension device would create an unacceptable risk to persons and equipment. The study recommended that the best solution to the problem was a modification to aircraft to contain the fuel; however, cost, time, and available technology make this a long-term solution.

4. Fort Rucker aircraft parking facilities and "hot" refueling procedures allow for the prevention of most soil contamination from fuel discharges during engine shutdown. Therefore, to the maximum extent possible, all nonemergency shutdowns of aircraft engines at Fort Rucker facilities should be over concrete or asphalt surfaces. Although many of the aircraft parking pads were not designed for the current fleet of larger helicopters, soil contamination around the parking pads can be prevented if aviators ensure an aircraft positioning over the parking area, which allows the fuel discharge to occur over the impermeable surface. A little care in the prevention of soil contamination will avoid huge cleanup costs.

5. This memorandum supersedes GC Policy Memo 23-21, dated 29 June 2023, and will remain in effect until changed or formally rescinded. The point of contact is Mr. Samuel Lynon at 334-255-1656.

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Garrison Commander