

## COMMUNITY CORNER

## Save money, energy with 'go green' initiative, commander says

By Col. Kevin Brown  
GARRISON COMMANDER

We can each do our part to create a sustainable Army. From changing the light bulbs in on-post homes to encouraging van pooling, Fort Riley has initiatives at all levels to "go green."

Whether you live off post or on post, there are a number of things you can do to save money and energy in the home.

## AT HOME

Last year, homes at Fort Riley began participating in the Department of Defense's Resident Responsibility Utility Program.

This program was designed to help servicemembers become more aware of the amount of energy they consume at home.

Additionally, it holds residents responsible for excessive energy use. By creating awareness and accountability, the program ensures wise energy use and increases energy conservation awareness.

Again, whether on post or off, you can save money and energy by taking some simple time-proven measures.

When in the kitchen, mini-

mize the amount of time you keep the refrigerator door open.

The cold air which escapes when the door is opened is replaced by warm air which must be cooled all over again, requiring more energy.

Check to make sure you have the temperature set so your refrigerator is keeping your food cold without being set too low - 38 degrees is generally accepted as cool enough.

When using the dishwasher, let the dishes air dry instead of using the heat drying function, and always run the dishwasher with a full load.

If you're cooking smaller meals, use the microwave instead of heating up the oven, or grill outside.

In the laundry room, use the proper load size when washing clothes. Also, keep your lint trap clean. This not only helps clothes dry faster, but it also prevents a fire hazard.

If you have a clothesline, hang your clothes outside to dry, or you can buy clothes drying racks to air dry clothes in your home.



Col. Brown

This is a great way to save energy instead of using a dryer, and many clothes labels suggest this method.

Throughout your home, keep curtains closed during the day to keep the air inside from heating up.

Use ceiling and floor fans to help keep the air circulating when you're in the room. When you aren't at home, turn up your thermostat to cut down on air conditioning costs.

Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs, and turn off computers and unplug cell phone chargers when you aren't using them.

For more information on saving money and energy at home, visit [www.energy.gov/energysavings.htm](http://www.energy.gov/energysavings.htm).

## ON THE ROAD

One of the ways you can save money on your way to work is by joining a vanpool. Fort Riley began this program in June 2009.

It now has more than 100 Soldier and civilian participants. Riders receive vouchers from the government to pay for their share of the vanpool. Besides saving gas money, riders get a chance to meet other post employees and save wear

and tear on their vehicles.

To find out more about the vanpool program, contact Laura Morris with the Directorate of Logistics at 785-239-6506 or [laura.morris3@us.army.mil](mailto:laura.morris3@us.army.mil).

If joining a vanpool isn't feasible for you, there are still ways to improve your fuel efficiency. Even if you don't invest in a new car which gets 40 miles per gallon, you can increase the fuel efficiency of your old vehicle just by changing the way you drive.

First, drive sensibly. Speeding decreases the fuel efficiency of your car. Slowing down is a great way to save money. For every five miles per hour over 60 you drive, you're adding about \$0.24 to each gallon of gas.

Put another way, the extra speed of five miles per hour will only gain you about four minutes on a trip to Topeka, or eight minutes on a trip to Kansas City, but it will cost you a full gallon of gas.

Air conditioner use also consumes extra fuel. A rule of thumb to consider is if you're taking a short trip at under 40 miles per hour, consider rolling down your windows as opposed to using the air conditioner.

Reduce excess weight in your car by removing unneeded

items from your trunk. You'll see your gas mileage increase by up to 2 percent for every 100 pounds of weight you remove. And while a luggage carrier might not weigh much, it causes drag on your car and can reduce your mileage. Take it off and store it until you need it for your next long trip.

Take care of your car. Whether you take your car off post, use the car care center at the Main Post Shopette or do it yourself at the Auto Skills Center, changing your oil and filters, properly inflating and aligning your tires and getting regular tune ups can all help you get the most out of your car.

For more information on fuel economy and how you can save money at the pump, visit [www.fueleconomy.gov](http://www.fueleconomy.gov).

## AT WORK

You can help save Army energy at work.

Fort Riley's annual energy bill is in the millions of dollars, and saving energy saves money. Just like at home, lights not being used should be turned off.

If you have windows with blinds in your office, open them to let in natural light.

Open blinds on west-facing windows in the morning and

on east-facing windows in the afternoon. That lets in light, but blocks the brightest rays which can heat up your workspace.

Close the opposite blinds by angling them upward to send any light coming in to the ceiling, where the warm air is already collecting.

Make sure the thermostat is properly set on your heating and air conditioning system. Army standards for heating and cooling are 72 degrees in winter and 74 degrees in summer (plus or minus two degrees). Use floor fans to help move the air and keep you cool on the hottest days.

Finally, do what you can to keep the heated or cooled air inside your building.

Keep exterior doors and windows closed. If you have badly leaking doors or windows, call the Public Works Service Order desk at 785-239-0900 to get them fixed.

We can all do our part to help conserve energy and money on post and at home. Implement some of these tips and see what a difference we can make.

*If you would like to comment on this column or suggest a topic for the Community Corner, e-mail [riley.post.newspaper@conus.army.mil](mailto:riley.post.newspaper@conus.army.mil).*

## Post Education centers to offer ASE cert exam

## EDUCATION SERVICES

The semi-annual Automotive Service Excellence certification exam will be administered on Nov. 9, 16, and 18 at Education Services, 217 Custer Ave., Main Post, Fort Riley.

Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support funds three \$28 exams per test cycle for active-duty, Reserve and National Guard personnel.

Paper and pencil exams are conducted twice a year at more than 750 locations around the country and are administered by ACT, known for its academic and occupational testing programs.

DANTES test sites also administer these exams, however, participants must register in advance and pay the registration fee.

Active-duty, Reserve and Guard personnel are eligible for the three funded ASE tests only at the DANTES test sites.

The non-refundable registration fee is \$36 and covers the cost of three regular ASE exams. Most regular and re-

certification ASE exams cost \$28; the Advanced (L1, L2) exams cost \$56.

DANTES does not fund any re-certification or advanced examinations. The registration window will be open until Sept. 15.

Those planning to take the test may stop by either of the on-post education centers, located at 217 Custer Ave., Main Post, or 7656 Graves St., Custer Hill; or by calling 785-239-6481 and speaking with an education counselor for further registration details.

Since 1972, ASE certification has been the standard of automotive service professionals.

Currently, about 400,000 professionals hold ASE certifications.

Tests are divided into specialties including automobile, medium/heavy/truck, truck equipment, school bus, collision repair technicians, engine machinists, alternate fuels technicians, parts specialists, auto service consultants and collision damage estimators.

ASE study guides are available by visiting the ASE website at [www.ase.com](http://www.ase.com).

## What college-bound students should know

By Jackie Huls  
KANSAS STATE RESEARCH  
AND EXTENSION

Some college freshmen have their bags packed the week after they graduate from high school. Others put it off, and put it off, and put it off.

Some of this procrastination may come from anxiety over not knowing what they need.

Moving away from home can be overwhelming, so it's helpful to have an idea of what may be needed the first year away from home.

The first thing that is important for college freshman is to have an understanding of money.

Unfortunately, many kids go through their younger years never learning the value of a dollar or how to keep track of where they're spending the dollar.

To ease some anxiety and prevent a future financial disaster, talk to children about money.

Knowing how checking and saving accounts work, how to balance a checkbook and how to make a budget, can prepare children for a less stressful college experience and a more

successful adulthood.

Another part of understanding money is knowing how much a dollar can buy. Many college freshmen do not have the concept of how much things really cost.

When leaving home, they will be responsible for purchasing groceries, personal hygiene items and laundry supplies. These costs can really add up.

It is important for young adults to be aware of their cafeteria plan and how much they will need each month for things like snack foods, laundry detergent, soap and shampoo.

One way parents can teach this is take them grocery shopping a few times before they leave. Let them pick out things they might be likely to purchase when on their own. This gives them the opportunity to learn what things cost.

Another option would be to give them a monthly allotment and have them budget it themselves. Having an understanding of the cost associated

with living on their own can save a lot of headaches in the future.

Additionally, college freshmen need the knowledge of how to use a credit card responsibly.

They need to be aware of the different types of credit cards, interest rates and late fees, just to name a few.

Credit cards can be a vital part of a college student's life, or it can be something which haunts them for many years to come. They will probably be paying off student loans when they graduate and don't need the added stress of high credit card payments.

A final, and what may seem like the most important thing for freshman to know, is what to take along for the first experience of living away from home.

While everything they see in the weekly ads may seem vital, lack of space in their new living area needs to be kept in mind. Storage can be put under the bed, and closet space

savers will come in handy.

What clothing to take along also should be considered. Can they just take clothes for certain seasons and then pick up new stuff at the holidays? Just remember, roommates need space too.

For parents with a college freshman this year, there is a wealth of information on the Internet.

If the student is a high school junior or senior, contact CYS about the upcoming College Prep Series.

There will be classes offered on financial aid; ACT test preparation; and how to prepare financially for leaving home.

Classes also will be taught on resume and essay writing, the application process, charting your course, time and stress management, creating a portfolio, school transitions, job interviewing; and understanding your acceptance letter.

For more information, call 785-239-9885.