

BAE Systems

TEEA 2019 Winner: Innovative Operations/Management

At ABC Every Day Is Earth Day



The Austin site of BAE Systems, an international defense and aerospace company, has taken steps to make their campus more environmentally friendly. Their projects have focused on resource conservation, chemical elimination, energy reduction, and wildlife restoration.

These efforts include reducing their potable water use, establishing monarch and pollinator habitats, hosting relocated honey bees, increasing recycling efforts and composting, eliminating invasive plants, and restoring native species to many areas throughout their campus.

By converting the cooling towers on campus to use reclaimed water instead of potable water, switching irrigation systems to reclaimed water, and installing a rainwater capture system on their commercial building – the first in Austin – the campus is able to reduce their use of potable water by over 12 million gallons a year. In addition, they became the first commercial enterprise in Austin to receive a permit to use captured rainwater in restrooms using a system of UV lights, storage tanks, pressurization tanks, and pumps.

On their campus, BAE followed the guidance of Texas Parks and Wildlife to change the landscaping from invasive turf grass to native vegetation. The native plants do not require the maintenance, irrigation, or fertilization of the prior landscaping, eliminating the fuels and chemicals needed for landscape upkeep, while improving flood control from storm water runoff.

In a collaboration with Texan by Nature, BAE developed a plan to grow more plants that support monarch butterflies and their migration. The campus also hosts rescued honeybees in hives. These efforts, as well as their efforts to restore native species, have allowed their campus to be certified as a wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation.

Over the last three years, BAE has also made an effort to reduce their landfill waste. In the cafeteria, they shifted from Styrofoam and single-use utensils toward more sustainable options. They have included compostable containers, switched from using plastic water bottles to pitchers in meetings, and offer reusable silverware. In addition, the staff works together to collect compostable materials from cafeterias and breakrooms around campus. These reduction efforts have diverted over 70 percent of their waste from landfills.