The Asset Protection and Pollution Prevention Branch, Code 0772, working out of the Navy Weapon Systems Support Command in Mechanicsburg PA has a dynamic mission that includes the following environmental programs; Green Procurement, Waste Reduction Afloat Protects the Sea (WRAPS), and Plastic Removal in the Marine Environment (PRIME). The goal of these programs is to work directly with sailors and procurement specialists to develop new and improved ways for the Navy to ensure it is a successful environmental steward. This presentation will cover the results from some of the latest initiatives and then finish with a discussion of potential opportunities for other government organizations and the private sector to help the Navy continue to improve its environmental readiness.

The impetus for many of the projects initiated by 0772 stems from data retrieved from waste studies performed on ships during active deployments. Analyzing the waste stream leads to a wealth of information about consumption habits and problematic packaging materials. Packaging touches every item and is an ideal commodity for increased environmental consideration. The Navy is moving forward to reduce the environmental impact of packaging materials by increasing Green Procurement of packaging materials coupled the with actively identifying waste reduction opportunities within the supply chain.

In 2011, 0772 has also begun, in conjunction with the other services, to Green military packaging used for repairables and high dollar consumables. A joint service Sustainable Packaging Materials Working Group was convened. The effort to date has focused on altering material specification and purchasing documents to take full advantage of existing environmental benefits. For example, Kraft paper, a common wrapping material, usually has some level of recycled content. By including this capability in the specification document, the government can now track and receive credit for utilizing an environmentally friendly material. The next steps will be to identify novel environmentally beneficial materials that can replace traditional packaging materials without degradation in performance.

The Navy’s PRIME and WRAPS programs reduce solid waste at sea, encourage environmentally friendly products, expand awareness and evaluate and implement solutions. Because packaging wastes are a large contributor of the shipboard solid waste stream, we are spearheading solid waste reduction efforts by implementing reusable bottles by sailors and by developing alternatives to plastic bags. By strategic teaming with GSA and DLA, we are working to identify consumable items that can be procured with minimal packaging by Navy activities and as a result reduce solid waste.

In another strategic teaming relationship, the Navy is actively working with GSA and Amazon.com to identify common items in the supply systems. GSA provides the Navy consumables and Amazon.com’s Frustration-Packaging provides consumers with items packaged with minimal packaging. By identifying common items, we have initiated a pilot project to reduce packaging wastes. We're working to shift the paradigm of procurement specialists to an ecommerce perspective and to utilize ecommerce packaging materials at the same time in an effort to reduce packaging wastes.

Developing new Green initiatives, identifying environmentally friendly products, and creating sustainable best practices are a team effort.