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NEWS RELEASE

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Martinsburg VAMC invites community to Earth Day event

MARTINSBURG, W.Va. – The Martinsburg Veteran Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) is inviting the community to attend their annual Earth Day Celebration open house April 22 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

“The Martinsburg VAMC is definitely one of the environmental leaders for its Green Environmental Management System, utilizing multiple techniques rarely seen at one facility. Dan Juraschek, green environmental management system recycling coordinator said. “Not only are our activities improving the environment, they are saving money and providing some innovative ways to better serve our Veterans.”

The event will take place at the main hospital building 500 in room 1B-114 and will highlight the medical center’s green initiatives and other programs. Visitors will have a chance to see a few of the recent green renovations during bus and walking tours around the campus. The tour highlights include the green renovations, electric vehicles and solar charging station, food waste composting program, nature based therapy techniques such as our green house, sun tubes, on-site recycling efforts and initiatives, as well as advanced storm water management techniques.

The medical center has received numerous awards for its programs and efforts aimed at protecting the environment. In 2010, the medical center was the recipient of the 2010 GreenGov Presidential Good Neighbor Award for its Green Kitchen initiative, which decreased landfill food waste by 86 percent. This program was recently featured on PBS http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sh3d_Pqr6vM#t=38, plans are to expand this program in 2014. The medical center also received in 2010 the VA Sustainability Achievement Award for its solar-powered charging station, which reduced the level of carbon dioxide emissions released into the atmosphere.

One of the most recent green projects completed at the medical center was the vehicle wash bays that use rainwater harvesting and a natural filtration recycling system. Luis Ortiz, project manager said, "Controlling storm water and protecting the environment is everyone's responsibility. This simple vehicle washing center is just a small but very demonstrable part of our effort."

The vehicle bays and the nature and fitness trails will be included in the tours.

For more information about Earth Day, the medical center's green programs and initiatives, or scheduling a large group, contact Dan Juraschek at 304-263-0811, ext. 2567 Daniel.Juraschek@va.gov or Rob Moore at 304-263-0811, ext. 3412 Robert.Moore10@va.gov.

The Martinsburg VA Medical Center mission is to honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being. Located in West Virginia, the medical center offers a comprehensive range of services, including internal medicine, ambulatory surgery, audiology and speech pathology, dental, nursing home, nutrition, podiatry, prosthetics, women's health, mental health, and rehabilitation medicine. With a service area of nearly 125,000 Veterans in West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, the medical center operates seven Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC). Four of the clinics are VA-staffed and are located in Cumberland, Hagerstown and Fort Detrick, Md., and Stephens City, Va. Three of the clinics are contracted and are located in Petersburg and Franklin, W.Va., and Harrisonburg, Va.