



**United States Marine Corps**

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**PRESS RELEASE #17-031**

October 19, 2017

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**COMMISSARY CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER TWENTYNINE PALMS, Calif. – The reopening of the commissary at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, California, is now just a matter of time, said Keith Hagenbuch, DeCA’s executive director for store operations.

“We appreciate the continued patience of our patrons at Twentynine Palms as we finalize store cleanup efforts,” Hagenbuch said. “I can say we are closing in on a definitive date to reopen this store.”

Since the commissary closed Oct. 11 due to a health code violation resulting from a rodent control issue, DeCA’s team of public health, sanitation, engineer and store operations experts have been working with the installation’s military health personnel and the pest control contractor to address the issues. Their tasks include addressing how and where rodents are entering the store and eliminating those access points, thoroughly cleaning the store and comprehensively inspecting all products.

In the meantime, the store sold a limited selection of 20 nonperishable items outside the store on Wednesday afternoon. This sale is expected to continue daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. until the store reopens. Customers can also make special orders for products at the site, but those

products must be among the products inside the store that have been properly inspected and cleaned.

“Right now we are still in clean up mode inside the store,” said Lt. Col. (P) Alisa Wilma, DeCA’s director of public health and safety. “We’re continuing to scrub every inch of this building, shelf by shelf, and double checking everything we’ve done to get this store ready.”

As they prepare to reopen, Wilma has customized and implemented an integrated pest management training plan for the store that takes into account the environment in which it operates.

This plan includes proactive measures, such as making sure store entries are properly closed when not in use and promptly cleaning up spills from damaged product and ensuring proper storage is used to eliminate areas that could harbor pests. “We’re not only controlling this issue today, we’re working specifically to make sure it won’t happen again,” Wilma said.

The cleanup and pest control efforts lead to answering the No. 1 question for the Twentynine Palms community: When will the store reopen?

“We’re making great progress on all fronts, so we expect to answer that question soon, very soon,” Hagenbuch said. “Bottom line, our goal is always to ensure all health and sanitation standards are met, so we can restore the community’s commissary in a safe, clean and pest-free environment for our Twentynine Palms patrons.”