



# News Release

## UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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### **Charleston AFB Commissary sets opening date**

**CHARLESTON AFB, S.C.** – Regardless of superstitions traditionally surrounding Friday the 13th, it promises to be a lucky day for Charleston AFB Commissary shoppers. That’s the first day of business for the new \$12.9 million commissary, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony set for 9:45 a.m., immediately followed by the store’s opening.

The current facility’s last day of business will be Wednesday, June 11, offering regular hours of 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Neither store will be open on Thursday, June 12. The new store is located directly behind the current facility, and the main entrance is near the Base Exchange, facing Dorchester Road.

“We’ve all been waiting in great anticipation to open this gorgeous, state-of-the-art facility,” said Eddie Williams, store director. “All the commissary employees are as excited as the customers must be.”

Opening-day fun will include many product demonstrations with free samples, and free hot dogs and chips featured in the parking lot.

The new store’s sales floor, nearly twice the size of the old, will offer the “latest and greatest” in décor and conveniences, including wider aisles, a new bakery and expanded produce,

deli and frozen food sections. More than 3,000 new items will be added to the grocery department.

The new bakery will offer a variety of treats, including computer generated, edible pictures for special-order cakes. The deli will offer hot foods, including rotisserie chicken, chicken tenders, hot wings, potato wedges, soup and hot sandwiches. A variety of special-order platters will be available with items such as wings or finger sandwiches.

The new “shopping flow” and décor package represent the gold standard in commissary design today, said Williams. “This gives commissaries worldwide a more customer-friendly product flow and a layout that is as consistent as possible from location to location.”

In the new store, customers can feast their eyes and fill their shopping baskets with garden-fresh produce located prominently at the entrance. Also coming early in the shopping flow are the deli/bakery section and a grab-and-go case perfect for quick, convenient meals. The décor features modern aisle and department signage in soft colors and a “hangar style,” open-framework ceiling, further enhanced with brighter lighting throughout the store.

Parking will come at a premium temporarily, however, until the old facility is demolished.

“We ask for everyone’s patience with the limited parking situation, as the demolition project won’t be totally complete until early August,” said Williams. “Once the old building is gone and the new lot finished, we will have plenty of convenient parking.”

The old commissary was built in 1972 and renovated in 1990. It averages \$2 million in sales and nearly 34,000 shoppers monthly. Construction on the new facility started in December 2001. The original \$11.5 million contract award was adjusted slightly to the final cost of \$12.9 million following routine fiscal fine-tuning during the construction process.

Funding for building or renovating commissaries comes from the 5 percent surcharge added to each customer's purchase before coupons are deducted. Customers' surcharge dollars have paid for these projects since 1974.

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**(Media interested in attending should plan to arrive at the Dorchester Gate Thursday, June 12, at 12:45 p.m. for B-roll footage and 9:25 a.m. Friday, June 13, for the opening ceremony. MUST CONTACT 2 Lt. Kristy Miller at 963-5537 or Staff Sgt. Melanie Streeter at 963-5589 to express intent to attend or for more information.)**