

American Cemetery®

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• grounds
maintenance

Honoring Veterans by
**Improving
the Landscape**
Calverton Veterans National Cemetery, Long Island, N.Y.

b y j o a n n e c a s t a g n a



Veterans Day is celebrated every November to honor our uniformed personnel who have served our great nation.

It's also a time to honor those veterans who have made the ultimate sacrifice in combat.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District is doing its part to honor our deceased veterans by improving the conditions at the Calverton Veterans National Cemetery in Suffolk County, Long Island, N.Y.

The project will enhance the landscape of the 1,045-acre site, which has deteriorated over the years due to improper irrigation.

Families with loved ones buried there informed their local representatives of the substandard conditions and brown grass.

As a result, the Department of Veterans Affairs took action and sought the expertise of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which is now

involved in improving the cemetery's irrigation system and landscape conditions. The Army Corps is replacing more than 30 8-inch valves, installing a new irrigation system to several of the burial sections and constructing a new pump station to replace the cemetery's older pump station.

"The cemetery's landscape had significant deterioration because of a lack of a proper irrigation system," said Anthony DelVecchio, project engineer, New York District.

"The grass at the cemetery was watered using water cannon trucks," said Anthony Ciorra, chief, Civil Works Branch, New York District. "This method of irrigation is not effective in keeping the grass green during the warm summer months. The result is brown grass."

"Our mission was to help correct this deficiency," said DelVecchio. "We utilized our in-house expertise to design new automatic irrigation

systems in several of the main burial sections around Calverton Cemetery."

He added, "Last year, several of the cemetery's burial sections were provided with automatic site irrigation systems that are now being used."

For the last phases of the project, they wanted to negotiate a firm-fixed price with the contractor but were unable to do so. As a result, the project team combined the last two phases of the project into one project. By combining the phases, it allowed them to save money in contractor overhead and supervision.

The new irrigation system will be maintained by the cemetery staff.

"Next Veterans Day when visitors visit the cemetery, they will see greener grass near the graves of their loved ones," Ciorra said. •

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Calverton Veterans National Cemetery: (clockwise from far left) A soldier salutes the U.S. flag; the entrance to the Calverton National Cemetery; veterans graves; workers place a new irrigation system at the cemetery.

