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## **Nine things left by the Navy that are key to success at Quonset today - by Steven King**

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Steven J. King

The modern Quonset Business Park is Rhode Island's leading engine of job creation and economic growth. The park hosts 239 companies and over 14,000 jobs.

That success rests on the foundation of two neighboring, now-closed military bases built by the U.S. Navy in advance of World War II. Here's a quick list of valuable tools left by the Navy that have helped make Quonset the economic juggernaut it is today.

#### 1. 3,200 acres of land

The expanse of the base is fertile ground for large facilities that provide jobs in every sector of the economy. To ease the process for growing businesses, Quonset developed the "Site Readiness" program which prepared pre-permitted, shovel-ready sites primed for construction within 90 days of a company signing a lease and taking site control. In the past decade, the Site Readiness program has led to the creation of over 4,000 jobs and \$664 million in private investment at the business park.

#### 2. The Port of Davisville

Built for the Seabees, the port hosts one of the top 10 auto importers on the continent. The port supports 1,700 jobs, a number that will only grow as Quonset emerges as a key hub for the offshore wind industry in the North Atlantic.

#### 3. Quonset State Airport

As a key element of the state airport system, it serves as the home base for the men and women who serve our country in the 143rd Airlift Wing of the Rhode Island Air National Guard, while also supporting the business community as a general aviation airport. The airport provides the park with all four modes of transportation, including air, land, sea, and rail.

The Navy also left key infrastructure assets, including:

#### 4. Water system

Quonset's independent water system provides potable water and fire protection for all our businesses. It includes interconnections with local and regional water suppliers for redundancy and resiliency.

#### 5. Storm water system

Quonset's 64-mile network of stormwater pipes protects Narragansett Bay and was the first system in the state to adopt Rhode Island's cutting-edge program to manage runoff.

## 6. Wastewater treatment facility

Upgraded many times in the post-Navy era, Quonset's wastewater treatment facility and the team that operates it consistently earn national recognition for excellence as it serves the business park.

## 7. Open space

Today, Quonset maintains nearly 800 acres of protected open space, including four public beaches, and nearly four miles of bike paths.

## 8. 18-hole golf course

The 18-hole golf course at Quonset, owned and run by the town of North Kingstown, is one of the best public courses in the state. It has earned national recognition from the U.S. Golf Association as one of the nation's top courses at a former military base.

## 9. The Seabees "Can Do" Legacy

From polar wastes to tropical jungles, the Seabees lived up to their "Can Do" motto, despite countless obstacles. The team at Quonset approaches our work with the same commitment to excellence.

Steven J. King, PE, is the managing director of the Quonset Development Corp., North Kingstown, R.I.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540