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The Navy Region, Mid-Atlantic Public Safety, Virginia Beach Safety Storefront publishes this SafetyGram and widest dissemination within your organization as encouraged. Please post on official bulletin boards and route to your staff. Our web site at [www.nasoceana.navy.mil/safety](http://www.nasoceana.navy.mil/safety) also has lots of additional information to improve your safety posture.

Military readiness through occupational safety and health is essential to Homeland Security.



*A blue-capped exercise official watches as firefighters of Arlington County, VA provide emergency services to service members acting as victims during an 8 May 2002 drill simulating a chemical attack on the Pentagon. Photo by Linda D. Kozaryn.*

Following the events of 11 September 2001, sustaining operational readiness became the foundation of national security. Integral to readiness are safe and environmentally compliant ship and shore facilities from which Navy personnel work toward their mission of national defense. The Navy Occupational Safety and Health (NAVOSH) Program requirements and OSH professionals in the field are essential to sustaining safe and healthy workplace environments.

### Homeland Security

## Why the Nickels and Dimes?

By CWO4 Tony Evans

“Safety, safety, safety” What a bunch of garbage! You guys in the safety business really love to nickel and dime a guy to death. Do this, do that! Don’t do this, don’t do that! When are you going to get your act together?” These thoughts run through everyone’s mind once in a while. I’m in the safety business, and they run through mine, for good reason: Most people are ignorant! That is to say, we simply don’t know the safety requirements. Even safety experts can appear ignorant. For instance, 40 years ago no one knew the hazards posed by asbestos. What we have since learned about asbestos has made us more aware of the risks involved working with it. But what about the unknown hazards lurking around our offices and homes? What do we do? We can’t foresee the future. We can’t look at something and intuitively sense it is dangerous. Like I said, we are ignorant, and we know it. So, we nickel and dime you to death, trying to make sure the hazards and procedures we know to be harmful don’t “leap out and bite you.”

We do know losing a life is a terrible waste. Even injury or equipment damage is a waste. As you read this, you assume a long and enjoyable life lies before you. To shut the door on that life, or to close one of many roads you can travel, would be a shame. If you die from anything other than old age, it probably will be because someone did something wrong—more than likely that someone will be you. Always protect yourself because you are too valuable to waste. Everything you do touches on safety.

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## Why Prevent Accidents?

Why is it so important to prevent accidents? Do you view accident prevention as simply a way to avoid getting hurt? Do you work safely just because you want to? Perhaps you view accident prevention as a way of keeping your company happy or your supervisor off your back. Maybe you just do it because you have been told to.

Of course there are many reasons that a company wants its employees to work safely. But every one must have a more important reason to work safely than just because the company says to. They must have a personal reason. Your reason may be your family. What would they do if you were to get hurt? How about your hobbies? Would you still be able to enjoy them with a serious disability?

What you do for a living is nothing more than a means towards a goal that you have set for yourself. That goal may be the education of your children. You may plan to buy a home or a car. Maybe you want to get married after you have saved up enough money. Maybe your goal for now is just to make it to Friday night and going out on the town. Whatever your goals may be, they all generally tie back in some way to what you do for a living. And what you do for a living could be seriously derailed by an accident. All your goals can go up in smoke if you are injured and disabled.

A safety program is designed to help you reach your goals. It is not there just to make your work harder, or slower, or to meet some governmental guidelines. Safety and accident prevention programs are designed to PROTECT YOU so that you may reach your personal goals. When an unsafe act is pointed out to you, it is done so to help you by eliminating obstacles or job hindrances AND to insure that you get home all in one piece.

Every time you approach a project, every time you pick up a tool, every time you start a piece of equipment or machinery, think SAFETY. Look for what can go wrong and eliminate that possibility BEFORE your goals come to an abrupt end.

TAKE SAFETY PERSONALLY: MAKE IT A PART OF YOUR LIFE GOALS.

THINK SAFETY!



## New Ear Plugs Are Now Available

The fleet now can obtain earplugs from three different sources, depending on how quickly the earplugs are needed and availability. While each types of plug have unique features, the 20-year-old foamies are still the best bargain in terms of cost-per-pair. The Navy Environmental Health Center's hearing conservation team has found an acceptable alternative to the 20-year-old Navy standard, foam earplugs. The new plugs are available through the supply system. The replacements are described as universal-fit, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) ear plugs and come as two-color (orange-green), disposable ear inserts. The orange portion is inserted and, when properly done, only the plug's green portion is visible. The manufacturer, New Dynamics, is marketing them under the Sound Guard name.

These two-color plugs can be ordered with national stock number (NSN) 6515-00-137-6345. They come in dispenser boxes of 200 individually boxed pairs, and a case of 1,000 sells for \$185. When correctly worn, the plugs have a 19.1-decibel noise-reduction rating. During evaluation, these universal-fit plugs really did not provide adequate protection for some people—the plugs were too large or small for some ear canals. The hearing conservation team, therefore, suggested two substitutes, PVC foam-based plugs. These plugs are marketed directly by Tactical and Survival Specialties, Inc., since the plugs are not standard stock items. They can be ordered through GSA, using contract number GS-07F-9123D and the respective part numbers. For small ears, the part number is 1241-310-1009 and the nomenclature is EAR classic superfit-30. A case of 2,000 pairs

costs \$240. For large ears, use part number 1241-310-1008 and nomenclature EAR classic superfit-33. These plugs also come with 2,000 pairs per case, which costs \$252.

These new plugs and substitutes for small or large ear canals feature wearing ease, availability, and water-resistant material to reduce contaminant-absorption. They also meet ANSI and OSHA standards, making them attractive alternatives. However, new foams are not cheap. The 20-year-old standard foam earplugs still cost less and, when correctly worn, still can be as effective as newer replacements.

The standard, universal earplug ordering information is NSN 6515-01-137-6345 and nomenclature of Foam Plastic Ear Plug. A case of 4,000 pairs costs \$288. The cost savings averages five cents per pair of old foam plastic earplugs when compared to the cost of newer plugs. The standard earplug also has a higher 29-decibel noise-reduction rating.



It's that time again. School is starting again, which means that we will see the familiar sight of yellow school buses on the streets after an all too short respite. We have to rethink our driving habits and remind ourselves of the implications of this. We have to remember that we have to stop for school buses and be aware that children once again are teeming on the streets in the early morning and afternoons. Additionally, cars driven by teachers, other school staff, and students are going to add to our already crowded streets. It might be

prudent to expect a few more minutes added to your commute. Plan ahead and apply ORM to your individual driving situation.

#### **Tips for the Day (Living Longer & Staying Younger)**

**A Slimming Pre-Meal Practice** - Eating a piece of fruit before each meal may help to melt pounds away. In a recent study, women who ate a small apple or pear before each meal lost more weight than women who skipped the fruit but followed the same reduced-calorie diet. Fiber-filled fruits help to satiate hunger, which probably results in lower calorie intake from the meal, researchers speculate.

**Citrus for a Sunny Disposition** - Sipping some folate-rich orange juice in the morning may give you reason to smile. Diets that contain ample amounts of folate-rich foods, such as orange juice, keep homocysteine levels in check. Scientists recently found a connection between homocysteine levels and emotional well-being. In a study, people with high levels of homocysteine in their blood were more likely to experience depression.

**Salt Assault** - Even if you never touch the saltshaker, there's a good chance you could be getting too much sodium in your diet. Americans' average salt intake is nearly twice the recommended daily limit, and high sodium intake may contribute to hypertension. Most dietary sodium comes from prepackaged items, such as spaghetti sauce, frozen pizza, canned soups or vegetables, and salty chips or pretzels. Choose reduced-or low-sodium alternatives whenever possible.

**We appreciate all those who contributed articles to this newsletter.**



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