



Health Promotion Toolbox

July: Safety Month

Message for Commanding Officers

Some Sailors and Marines participate in off-duty activities that may put them at risk for accidents that could have serious consequences. In fiscal year 2014, 59 Sailors and 53 Marines died in mishaps, primarily related to private motor vehicle and off-duty/shore recreation mishaps.¹ In addition to the expense and tragic loss of lives caused by mishaps, injuries put service members on the sidelines, derailing their productivity and threatening their fitness for duty.

Many Sailors and Marines are already following good safety measures. According to the 2015 Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment, active duty Navy respondents indicated that 94 percent of respondents use helmets, 97 percent use safety equipment, 96 percent do not drink and drive, and 95 percent use seat belts.² Similarly, active duty Marine Corps respondents indicated that 94 percent of respondents use helmets, 95 percent use safety equipment, 96 percent do not drink and drive, and 95 percent use seat belts.² However, as the mishaps in fiscal year 2015 suggest, if proper safety measures are not always followed in the workplace and when participating in recreational activities, Sailors, and Marines risk injuring themselves and potentially those around them. Being informed about common workplace and recreational safety hazards can keep everyone safe.

What Can Leadership Do?

As a commanding officer, you play an important role in promoting safety among your Sailors and/or Marines:

- Reference the [Activity Ideas](#) for resources about safety, and tips on how to motivate and educate Sailors, Marines, and civilian personnel to exercise safety measures.
- Follow guidance as defined in [OPNAV 5100.25C](#) and [MCO 5100.30B](#) to reduce off-duty and recreational activity accidents, and in [OPNAV 5100.12J](#) and [MCO 5100.19F](#) for traffic and motorcycle safety that aims to reduce death, injury, and damage. If a mishap does happen, you and your command should follow [OPNAV 5102.1D](#) to report it.



You can work with Health Promotion Coordinators, Safety Officers, and Command Fitness Leaders to:

- Use the resources from the [Naval Safety Center](#), including the ‘[101 Critical Days of Summer](#),’ to recommend preemptive measures to take to prevent accidents during the summer months.
- Teach your command about the dangers of [distracted driving](#), [drowsy driving](#), and other potential road trip driving hazards with the [Summer Driving Safety](#) fact sheet.
- Provide tips on how Sailors and Marines can [stay rested when sleeping is difficult or irregular](#).
- Provide information to your command about ways to prevent [overuse and musculoskeletal injuries](#) related to training.
- Learn about ways to maintain an [office environment](#) that is safe and healthy for the entire workforce.
- Challenge your command to take the Keep What You’ve Earned [Play to Live Pledge](#) to drink responsibly this summer.
- Help your command understand the [signs of alcohol abuse](#) and provide tips for cutting back on alcohol consumption.
- Summer storms can include lightning, tornados, strong wind, hail, and flash floods. Inform your command about what to do to [stay safe before, during, and after a summer storm](#), including how to create a disaster preparedness kit.

References

¹ Naval Safety Center Annual Mishap Overview: FY2014. Naval Safety Center.

http://www.safeharbor.navy.mil/navsafecen/Documents/media/FY14_Annual_Report.pdf. Published 2015.

Accessed April 2016.

² Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center EpiData Center Department. Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk

Assessment 2015. <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/general-tools-and-programs/2015-HRA-Report-TR-214-2016.pdf>. Published May 2016. Accessed May 2016.