



From Our Readers...

Dear Editor:

The cleaning liquid Simple Green should not be used to clean aluminum equipment or parts because it is highly corrosive.

According to an article at <http://www.avweb.com>, a 3.5-gram aluminum alloy sample was immersed into a container of Simple Green. After one week, the sample was 295 milligrams lighter. The article further states that the Air Force issued a statement not to use Simple Green on Air Force equipment containing aluminum. The Air Force statement can be found at <http://www.avweb.com/other/usaf0020bl.pdf>.

Thought you Navy folks would like to have this information.

MSgt. Larry Stulz
Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

We appreciate your information about Simple Green. Lt. David Mims, head of the Occupational and Environmental Health Division here at the Safety Center, researched the Simple Green situation. He found that the Naval Air Warfare Center (NavAir) disapproved of the use of Simple Green for naval aviation in 1993. They have a documented incident of crazing of an F-18 canopy following the unauthorized use of Simple Green. According to an official at NavAir, they have tested the product at least three times since 1989. Simple Green fails sandwich corrosion and total immersion-corrosion tests for aluminum. That official also said NavAir recommended that commands remove Simple Green from their spaces. It's just too easy for someone who's told to

clean something to grab a bottle of Simple Green off the shelf and use it on an airplane or equipment made of aluminum.—Ed.

Dear Editor:

When I saw the Spring 2000 issue of *Ashore*, I read my article, "When You've Got the Wrong MSDS, and OSHA Comes Knocking." I want to clarify one point in the article.

The article says the HazCom Standard states that citations shall be issued to the employer only when MSDSs or labels are missing. That information is in the compliance directive of CPL2-2.38D, rather than in the standard itself.

Amy Barker
American Management Systems

Dear Editor:

I was reading *Ashore* and saw your request for stories about car crashes. The odds were pretty slim that I would even see this magazine because I am not on active duty yet. I'm a cadet at The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina, and was in the middle of my first-class midshipman cruise aboard USS *Detroit* (AOE 4) in Earle, N.J.

I want to tell you about a crash that I witnessed outside the gate of the weapons station at Earle on July 24. This incident was one of the most important lessons I learned during my cruise. Every time I'm behind the wheel, I think about the people involved. It serves as a reminder for me to drive defensively and not emotionally.

Midn. Nikolas F. Fialka
The Citadel

You can read Midn. Fialka's story on page 28.—Ed.

Dear Editor:

The Navy's Right Spirit Campaign is ongoing and has the theme of responsible drinking. The recent NavAdmin 202/00 supports a resurgence of Right Spirit action. MCPON is also strongly behind invigorating the campaign.

We solicit your support. In particular, the article in your Summer 2000 issue would have been a great opportunity to use Right Spirit. It would have made an excellent back cover. The article on page 30 really does not take the correct Navy position on alcohol abuse, although it was an innovative use of ORM. The light-hearted use of a designated driver is after the fact. After the fact, when responsibility has failed, designated driver use is good. However, Navy personnel should not get to that point, and if the Right Spirit principles are applied, it would not happen. The article leaves the implication that drinking too much is a given. The ORM identification of the hazards starts too late, and the assessment is incorrect.

The correct Navy position is plan your evening to not drink to impairment or to not drink at all. If you do, it must be done responsibly. This policy does not come across in the article. DWI arrests of Navy personnel have come down each year for the last four years, and we want to continue that trend.

Mike Beech
Head, Alcohol Abuse Prevention
Navy Personnel Command

The risk-assessment process in the article was based on it being done before going out to drink. That's why Ken is included in the group. However, risk assessment can be done any time, before or during an activity, and can be done for each specific activity. Obviously, when alcohol is involved, risk assessment is best done before going out on the town, but when someone has too much to drink, realizing he shouldn't take the risk of driving home and getting a ride with someone is preferable to getting behind the wheel of a car.—Ed.

Dear Editor:

I agree with the "Do-It-Yourself Disasters" article in the Fall 2000 issue of *Ashore*. In a matter of seconds, a small job, done unsafely, can result in a painful disaster that can require weeks or months of recovery—if you recover at all. I have a few comments on the article that might help your readers put some of the points of the article into perspective.

Since your readers are Navy and USMC employees, OSHA is only indirectly involved in safety enforcement at their commands. Whether at work or at home, the employee is almost always responsible for his or her own safety. The safety manager probably won't be there when they decide to refinish something. They must make the right choices the first time, and every time.

The paragraph on the drywall job should have emphasized the working condition rather than the dust. It said the work was being done in a dark area. No home repairs should be done in dark or semi-dark condi-

tions. You need light to ensure good quality of work and to enhance your safety. A person may inhale gypsum dust for years and never get lung cancer. However, he could get injured immediately while fumbling around in the dark.

Safety managers typically do not "throw the book" at employees after they have suffered a mishap. We know we must be neither judgmental nor imply that the employee was clumsy, stupid, careless, etc. We all benefit from a "kinder, gentler" approach.

Most home repairs are made with no adverse consequences, but if you do enough of them, something can go wrong. With that in mind, some of your readers may wonder what points are being made or implied with this article. Is it that much safer to hire a contractor to do these types of jobs? Probably. Adequate tools are mentioned, but only one of the scenarios (the one involving car jacks) seemed to involve tool deficiencies. You also mention that people should use ORM, but give no specifics of how it would apply to these jobs.

Martin P. Clark
Safety Manager, Atlantic Division
Naval Facilities Engineering Command

The number of workers on the job far outnumber the safety professionals, but at home, you are not only the worker, but you are the person responsible for safety. We want people to practice the same habits at home as they do at work. We realize we didn't go into specifics about ORM for each of the scenarios. If you want to see specific ORM steps for different situations, see our Winter 99-00 issue, which is available on our website.—Ed.

Ashore's official distribution is to supervisors and managers who oversee workplace safety, enforce safety rules and prevent mishaps. These readers pass on the contents of the magazine to their personnel and employees via base newspapers, Plans of the Day, and other local internal communication media.

The primary target audience also includes Navy personnel and civilian employees responsible not only for their own safety, but for safety in these fields: occupational safety and health, motor vehicles, explosives and weapons, fire protection, environmental health, recreation and athletics, Marine Corps off-duty activities, and training.

Members of the target audience are located at shore bases, in aircraft squadrons, and aboard ships and submarines.

We welcome your comments about the articles in this magazine or about any safety issue. Send letters to the editor, with your name, address and work phone number to:

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You can e-mail letters to vmack@safetycenter.navy.mil or fax them to (757) 444-6791 (DSN 564). Letters may be edited for space and clarity.