

ment state of rest. Unfortunately, that item tends to be a windshield, tree, ground, or any other object.

Research has shown that lap and shoulder safety belts reduce the risk of fatal injuries 45 percent to front-seat occupants. That NHTSA stat from January 2006 also says safety belts reduce moderate-to-critical injuries 50 percent. As Buffy the Vampire Slayer would say, "Things that make you go 'Duh!'"

Don't wear your seatbelt for me or because it's a requirement, wear it for:

- The motorist who can't bear to live because he or she ran over your body after it was ejected.
- Passing motorists who can't sleep at night because they witnessed your death in their arms.

- Your mother, father, sister, brother, shipmate, or other loved one whom you just talked with, kissed, hugged, e-mailed, or greeted and thought you'd see again. Their lives now are devastated.

No doubt you believe you're the safest driver in the world, that crashes happen to the other person, and you never will be in an accident. That statement might be true, but remember, a lot of other idiots are out there and ready to ruin your day. Do your family and friends a favor, wear a seatbelt, be safe, and drive safe.

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## Class C Mishap Summary

*By AMC(AW) Paul Hofstad*

**F**rom Jan. 01, 2006 to Mar. 31, 2006, the Navy and Marine Corps had 36 Class C mishaps, involving 33 aircraft. The damage total was \$1,803,743.

Every mishap from this period still is under investigation, so no specific reports can be referenced at this time, but I will tell you that a majority of the mishaps involved the movement of aircraft. Those mishaps involved aircraft moving under the control of aircrew—taxiing—and those being towed. In both cases, the damage was significant. The sad part is that we continue to see Class C mishaps, like these, all the time. In many cases, the only injury suffered is to a person's pride or backside. However, we still pay a hefty price whenever an aircraft ground mishap occurs.

Composite materials are adding to the high price tags, especially when a stabilizer or an aircraft wing accidentally is towed into a building, NAV pole, hangar-bay door, or another aircraft. The equipment always loses in events like this. The other losers are the commands involved because they have to forfeit OPTAR dollars to fix damaged components. I-level commands also feel the pain, too, because they now have their composite technicians working on damage that was preventable.

The big loser is the Navy and Marine Corps because we lose readiness when a valuable asset is non-mission capable. The aircraft or



An example of the damage from a bad move

equipment is unavailable while the damage is repaired. Those assets are an integral part of the Global War on Terror and can't be used until repaired.

Accidents will continue to happen, but we need to stop using the term "accidents" for events and mishaps that are preventable. No one goes to work in the morning thinking, "Today, I'll tow an aircraft into the side of a hangar." It does take a team effort, though, to prevent those types of events from happening. If you're a director on an aircraft move, be assertive and make sure each member of the team is doing his or her job correctly. In other words, take ownership of the process and help reduce mishaps.

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