

Keep Your Hands out of **MACHINERY!**

By MMC(SW) Phillip Anderson,
USS Trenton

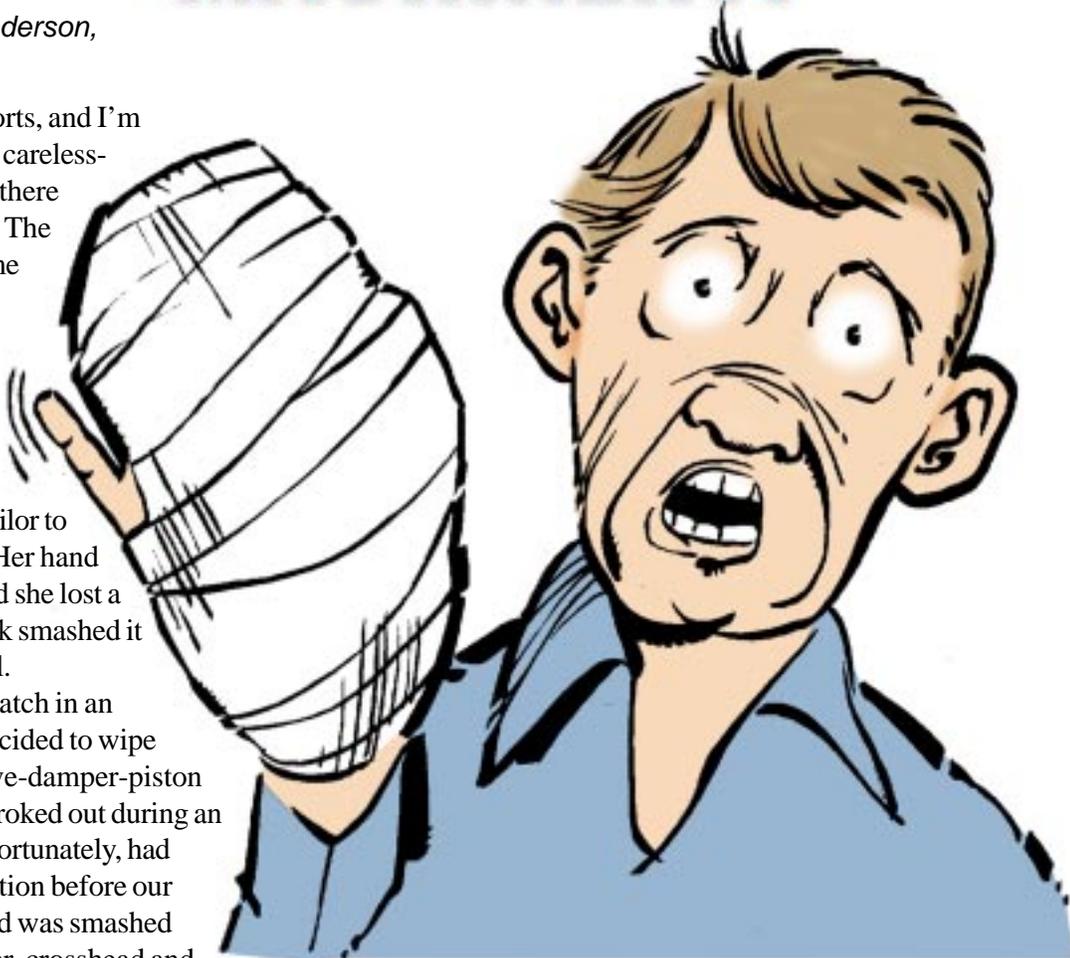
I've read many injury reports, and I'm perplexed by our Sailors' carelessness. What is going on out there—have we lost our minds? The following two tales make me wonder.

An MS3 lifted a 60-quart mixing bowl from its safety pins while the mixer was spinning! The side of the bowl hit the dough hook, causing the Sailor to lose her grip on the bowl. Her hand slipped inside the bowl, and she lost a finger when the dough hook smashed it against the side of the bowl.

A PO3 was standing watch in an arresting gear room and decided to wipe excess grease from a sheave-damper-piston rod, while the piston had stroked out during an arrestment. The piston, unfortunately, had returned to the battery position before our shipmate finished. His hand was smashed between the sheave damper, crosshead and cylinder assembly. He spent four days in the hospital undergoing surgery to repair his hand, and the ship lost his services for several weeks.

Why did these Sailors hurt themselves? Why would anyone risk injuries like these on such simple tasks? I can't figure it out. Nobody would jump in front of a speeding car, yet our shipmates continue to stick their hands into operating or rotating machinery, or into energized electrical equipment. Some might claim they were just trying to get the job done, but I don't buy it. Ignorance may be bliss, but stupidity is inexcusable—and often painful, if not deadly.

Our daily operations are dangerous enough. We have to do better than this when it comes to safety. We must stay alert and think about what we are doing, no matter how simple it seems.



I've been told some people have more common sense than others. This may be true, but a good training program can help increase situational awareness and will convince Sailors to pay more attention to detail. For instance, our aforementioned two Sailors should have known one of the fundamentals about operating equipment is to keep hands away from moving parts.

Supervisors must get around the ship, to check on their troops and to train and educate them when they need it.

By doing so, we'll all win. ☺

MMC Anderson wrote this article while assigned to the Naval Safety Center. He has since transferred to USS Trenton (LPD 14).