

## NAS Sigonella Safety Poster Program Saves Lives

Safety posters have been around for a long time. Typically, they show cartoon characters making foolish mistakes, such as someone slipping in a puddle of spilled oil or walking under a ladder just when a co-worker drops a tool on his head. Needless to say, those posters get a quick glance, and the message is quickly forgotten. In addition, commercially available safety posters seldom feature topics that are applicable to military settings. They also rarely show workers in military uniforms or working with equipment that is specific to Navy work environments.

At U. S. Naval Air Station, Sigonella (NASSIG), Italy, the NASSIG Safety Department started its Safety Poster Program after Wanda Walters, the NASSIG Ergonomics Program Manager in the NASSIG Safety Department

**DOES THIS LOOK LIKE YOUR CHILD  
IN THE COMMISSARY?**

- According to the archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND children are injured annually from falls and jumps from shopping carts.
- 80% of these falls occurred from children being unrestrained in the cart and 74% of the injuries are to the head and neck.
- Children under the age of five are at the greatest risk of these injuries. Children left unattended are at a greater risk of shopping cart injuries.
- A survey published in a National Safe Kids campaign noted 80% of parents/caregivers leave a child unattended at least once on a shopping trip.



**Always use shopping cart safety belts to restrain children and never let your child stand or be unattended in a shopping cart.**

observed an infant who had been left unattended in a grocery cart in the base commissary. Just as the baby started to fall out of the cart, he was rescued by on-lookers in the area.

Ms. Walters later noted that the commissary had no safety warnings to alert parents to child safety hazards while shopping. The NASSIG

Safety Department had a variety of commercial safety posters, but none featuring grocery carts or commissary safety. Ms. Walters and Mr. Kurt Davis, a Safety Technician at the NASSIG Safety Department, initiated a project to design, publish, and distribute a commissary safety poster to raise child safety awareness among parents. They designed a poster and photographed the child of their secretary, Jennifer Simpson, riding in a grocery cart in the commissary. Next, they distributed copies of the poster to the three Sigonella commissaries. The posters are prominently displayed at the ID check desk inside the entrance to the commissary.

Following enormously positive feedback to the commissary safety poster from Commissary Manager Gary Bufalo and customers, the NASSIG Safety Department started receiving requests for safety posters on other safety issues, including hearing protection and fall protection. Beginning by answering requests, the Safety Office published over 180 different safety posters on a wide variety of safety topics. All of the NASSIG Safety

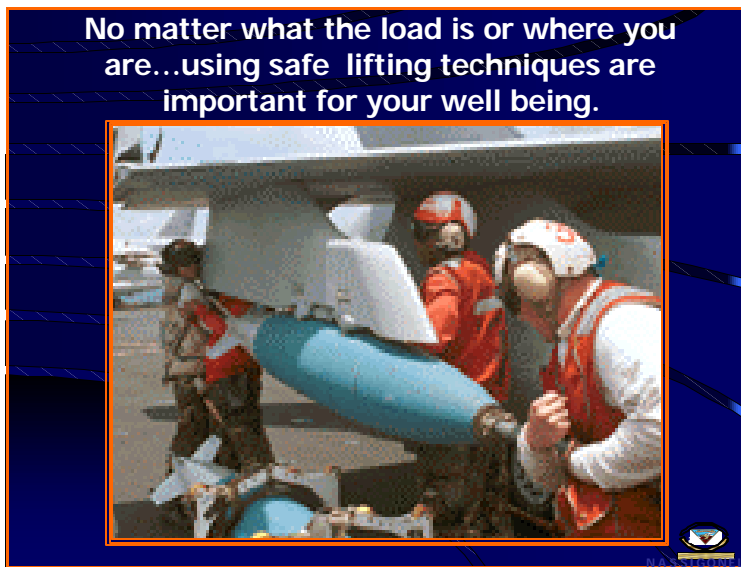
Department's posters are available to Intranet users of the secured base-wide NASSIG web site, INFOSIG <http://infosig.sicily.navy.mil/safety/>. The poster program is organized into five safety categories: work-related, ergonomics, recreation and sports, child and household, and traffic safety.

An additional benefit of Sigonella's Safety Poster Program's success is the relatively low cost of producing posters with safety messages that are applicable to the military lifestyle. Relevance to their environment and lifestyle helps Navy

employees to relate to the message communicated in a poster. Photographs used in the posters came from the Navy Photo Lab in Sigonella and from Department of Defense photography websites.



The cost of developing each poster is directly proportional to the time spent by Ms. Walters and Mr. Davis, often less than one hour. The



overall cost savings of making the posters in-house are tremendous. The average cost of one commercially produced poster ranges from \$15.00 to \$24.00. The cost of downloading and printing one of NASSIG'S safety posters is less than \$.50 (estimated cost of color printing from desktop printer). The posters are downloadable for base

personnel, and CD's are provided to other locations throughout the Department of Defense and the University of Vermont safety archive <http://siri.uvm.edu/ppt/poster.html>. Seventy-two of the safety posters are currently available for downloading from the Defense Environment Networking and Information Exchange (DENIX), a website maintained by the Department of Defense.

The Safety Poster Program helps the U. S. Department of Defense, at home and overseas, to provide military and civilian employees with relevant safety posters that promote safety program objectives and protect workers and their families from harm. Thanks to the NASSIG Safety Department's initiative, this service is available at no cost to those commands.



The Safety Poster Program also designs and distributes safety posters for the Department of Defense's Ergonomics Working Groups and for the Department of Defense schools' Backpack Project. This project targets school children and parents to create awareness related to back injuries from overloaded or poorly-designed backpacks. The Safety Poster Program has also supported the DOD Injury Prevention Working Group Project on Sports Injury Prevention.



The Safety Poster Program has been enthusiastically received by Navy commands and other services throughout the U. S. Department of Defense. The safety messages on the posters help save workers and their families from illnesses, injuries, and disabilities on the job, at home, and during recreational and leisure activities.

To learn more about the posters or to obtain a copy of the poster CD for your command, contact Wanda Walters, at commercial: 011-39-095-86-5630, DSN (overseas): 624-5630, or email [waltersw@nassig.sicily.navy.mil](mailto:waltersw@nassig.sicily.navy.mil)