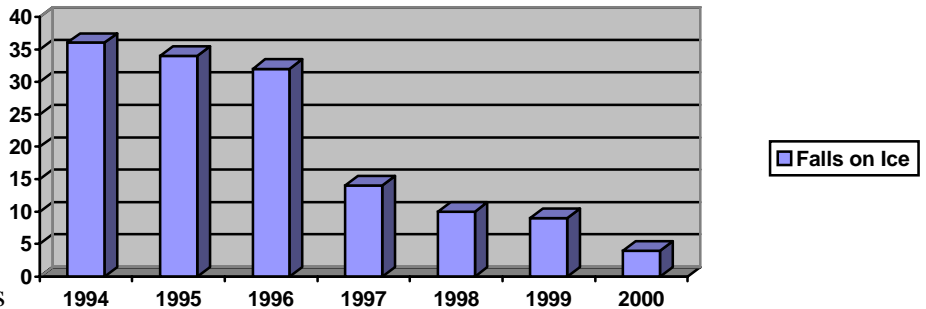


WINTER SAFETY AT NAVAL AIR STATION, KEFLAVIK

Slippery walkways can be a major problem during the winter months at Naval Air Station (NAS) Keflavik in Iceland. Winter comes early and stays late for this Sub-Arctic island nation. The long winter season begins in October and lasts through April, bringing freezing temperatures. Winter used to be the season for slips and falls at NAS Keflavik, but not any more!

NAS Keflavik's winter hazard awareness programs and increased safety precautions have contributed to a steady decline in outdoor, same level falls since 1995 (see chart at right). Now, NAS Keflavik has taken winter safety a step further by installing a new state-of-the-art ice and snow melting system to prevent slips and falls on sidewalks and walkways in front of many of the base's buildings.



NAS buildings, including work places and living quarters, are all heated by pollution-free water that comes from sources deep in the earth's crust. This naturally occurring



Sidewalks at NEX main store remain free of ice and snow due to the geothermal hot water piping system under them

geothermal water is used throughout Iceland to heat homes, schools, businesses, and government facilities. Nature's heating system now also keeps many sidewalks and entrances to buildings at NAS Keflavik free of ice and snow during the winter. The new ice-melting system was adapted from ice-melting systems used in surrounding communities and implemented at NAS Keflavik by the base's Safety Department and Public Works engineers.

Pipes carrying residual water from the geothermal hot water piping system that heats buildings on the base have been located under driveways and outdoor walkways at NAS Keflavik. The constant flow of warm water in the pipes melts snow and keeps ice from forming on the surfaces above the piping system. The melted snow runs into drains so that water does not accumulate or form ice around the edges of the heated walkways. Driveways and outdoor walking surfaces remain free of ice and snow throughout the winter, reducing the risk of slips and falls. The cost of this new system for preventing slippery outdoor walkways is minimal compared to the injuries avoided from falls on slippery surfaces.

All repairs, renovations, and new construction at NAS Keflavik now include the geothermal ice and snow melting system. In locations where this system has not yet been installed, NAS Public Works continues to use sand mixed with salt to prevent walking surfaces from becoming slippery.

Other programs that contribute to reductions in mishaps related to winter weather conditions include continuous awareness training for people living or working at the base. Among the topics discussed are: slippery roads and sidewalks, winter weather conditions in Iceland, coping with the long nights and short days during the sub-Arctic winter, and other winter safety concerns. Safety meetings emphasize winter hazards and safety precautions. Televised interviews, safety letters, and brochures also remind base personnel of winter hazards in Iceland. These preventive measures all contribute to the low level of winter mishaps among personnel assigned to NAS Keflavik.



Snow melts on NAS Headquarters' pavement

Point of Contact: Magnus Gudmundsson, Safety Manager, NAS Keflavik, Iceland
Telephone: (354) 425-4417
Email: magnus.gudmundsson@naskef.navy.mil