CFAY raises suicide prevention, motorcycle safety awareness

From CFAY Traffic Safety Office

In the 10 years since September 2001, many of our Sailors have heroically sacrificed their lives for the cause of freedom. This is a consequence of war and our profession. We risk our lives and honor those who have fallen.

However, over the past year, senseless mishaps and tragic suicides have increased, to include the unnecessary loss of 31 shipmates to suicide and 12 to motorcycle fatalities. This needless loss of life is unacceptable.

Additionally, the summer months find many Sailors in periods of change and transition, making it difficult for them to access their mainstay support of family, friends, and trusted shipmates. Without this support network, a Sailor's distress can easily go undetected. Check your friends and shipmates daily, ask the questions you might not want the answers to, and aid your friends and shipmates who leave you feeling uncertain about their personal well being.

With the 4th of July celebration weekend past, now we tend to get things out from the winter storage to use for the rest of the summer. One of those items is our beloved motorcycles. As we dust off the bikes and safety gear, we need to dust ourselves off and take a moment to check our skill levels.

Just jumping back on the old iron horse comes with hazards which we can mitigate with some refresher training.

We have effective programs for Motorcycle Safety and Suicide Awareness and Prevention in place and when implemented, have led to significant reductions in unnecessary deaths.

The success of these programs depends upon your personal involvement, attention, time, and leadership.

Our leadership is the key, and engagement in these areas is of the highest importance and clearly demanding of our best efforts.

Of the noted motorcycle fatalities, nine of the 12 Sailors we lost were riding sport bikes; seven of those nine had not completed sport bike training. Ensure your Sailors understand the requirement to complete all the training and to ride responsibly.

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) offers all the required motorcycle training (Basic Rider Course, Experienced Rider Course, and Military Sport bike Rider Course), and refresher training must be completed every three years.

U.S. Navy Recreation and Off-Duty Safety Instructor Douglas Knight, a Motorcycle Safety Foundtion RiderCoach® with Cape Fox Professional Services, gives pointers to a student during a Basic Rider Course (BRC). BRC, ERC (Experienced Rider Course) and the Military Sport Bike Riders Course are offered frequently throughout each year to help maintain situational awareness and safe riding habits for motorcylce riders of various skill levels.

Photo by Mark Elrod

Command Motorcycle Safety Representatives (MSR) should be calling on all their riders to ensure everyone is current on their training. This should help all our local riders ensure a safe riding season.

For more motorcycle info contact your command MSR or CFAY Traffic Safety.

For more information about Suicide Awareness and Prevention contact CFAY Fleet and Family Support Center at 243-8512.

CFAY energy reduction plan helps host country in time of need

From CFAY Public Works Department

On March 11, the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) electrical generating plants were knocked off-line due to the tsunami and its aftermath.

Since this event, TEPCO has had and will continue to have a difficult time supplying enough electricity to satisfy the electrical demands for the greater Tokyo area. In order to assist in reducing the overall reduction on the TEPCO electrical grid; all large energy users are to reduce their summer electrical demand by 15 percent relative to last year's peak summer demand. Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) is one of the largest TEPCO customers.

Because of our size and our commitment to support Japan during this difficult time, CFAY and its Negishi and Ikego housing detachments are expected to do their parts in reducing the electrical demand.

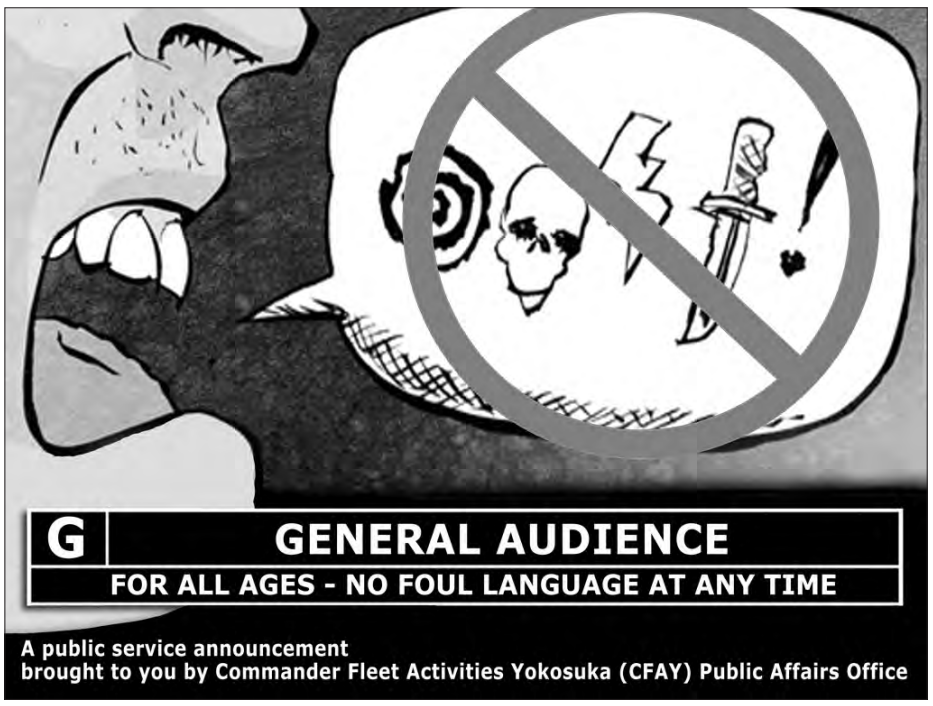
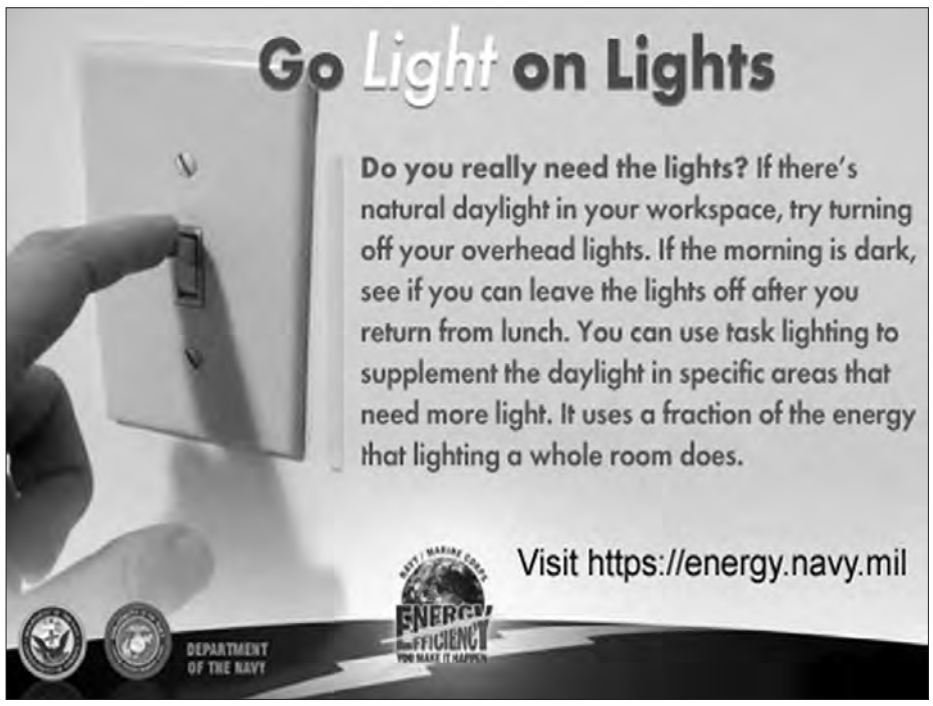
Several measures that have already been implemented here on CFAY have contributed to the overall reduced demand. CFAY has turned off streetlights in certain areas of our bases, removed lights from some garages and office spaces, and shifted water pump schedules to the off-peak hours.

Some of our larger tenants here on base are also doing their part to contribute to the overall demand consumption.

For instance, Morale,Welfare and Recreation division has turned off electrical advertisements and signboards, regulated the air conditioning (AC) to the mandated setting of 78 F (26 C), and turned off some TVs in their facilities; Department of Defense Educational Activities schools only uses AC from 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. during the summer school session; Chapel of Hope is only using AC in the sanctuary during programs and functions; Navy Exchange has turned off TV monitors and lights; the Defense Commissary Agency has turned off lights and created energy awareness signs for customer awareness.

Also, U.S. Naval Ship Repair Facility and Japan Regional Maintenance Center, Yokosuka, Fleet Industrial Supply Center Yokosuka, and Defense Logistics Agency Distribution Yokosuka have secured some of their elevators and have come up with other energy saving measures specific to their operations and CFAY Housing has completely shut down Sakura tower in preperation for renevation and has created a huge energy awareness program.

We now need you, as members of the community, to continue your efforts at work or at play, in the office or at home. CFAY has implemented a weekly monitoring system that will enable everyone to know how we are collectively doing on our energy demand. The system is simple – green means we are below the 25 percent demand reduction goal, yellow means we have exceeded the 25 percent reduction goal but we are still below the 15 percent goal, and red means we are danger close to the 15 percent reduction goal. If and when CFAY becomes too close to the 15 percent reduction mandated by the government of Japan, the base will have to implement more drastic measures such as securing large facilities (i.e. gym, recreation/community centers) and, or, rolling blackouts. You may be asking yourself, "Why is the goal set at 25 percent when we are only expected to achieve 15 percent?" The reason for the goal being 25 percent is that additional measures cannot be implemented immediately. Therefore the 25 percent threshold is a buffer that allows the base to implement additional measures in order to ensure that we stay below the 15 percent mandate.

Many of you have already been doing your part by keeping your thermostats set at 26C, not using washers and dryers during the peak usage hours of 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. and turning off AC units and lights in rooms that are not being occupied. We thank you for your efforts and they are making a difference. For those of you who have not yet been focusing on energy conservation, please make a concerted effort to do your part. If everyone does their small part, we stand a much better chance of avoiding larger, more painful measures, such as rolling blackouts.

We will continue to push the weekly status via Facebook, the Seahawk, and Channel 15. Thank you for your efforts in continuing to support this CFAY goal.