



# The Porcelain Press

NSWC Indian Head Division  
Safety Department Newsletter

9<sup>th</sup> InSTALLment

Distributed to a Restroom near you

June 2007/July 2007

## The Seven Deadly Sins of Safety

### I. Procrastination

Why do now what you can do much later? All of us have done it. Put off doing something intentionally, often with less-than-desirable consequences. We wait until the last minute to do our taxes, get things fixed, or even clean up the work place, until it is so late that we increase the risk of what we are doing.

### II. Ignorance

We have heard this adage "ignorance is bliss" and probably have had a blissful moment or two ourselves. As adults, we have some notion of what will hurt us and what won't. Children and the uninformed, on the other hand, have a rite of passage through learning these things on the road to experience. We are part of that learning process and must ensure they know the rules and the proper use of equipment that is designed to protect them from harm.

### III. Complacency

Complacency is a self-satisfied state of mind oblivious to any danger present. We regularly experience complacency in our personal lives at home and at work. The key is being cognizant of its existence and the measures we can take to offset any negative consequences. The places we feel the most familiar with can be the most dangerous because the threat is not so obvious to us. When we feel confident the environment is stable, we often forget things are subject to change and can become unsafe in an instant.

### IV. Cluelessness

Have you ever been around someone who was completely or hopelessly bewildered, unaware, or foolish? When asked to complete a task, they would do it willingly, no questions asked. It was the completion of the act and not the product that they took satisfaction in. To them, getting it done meant it was done--it did not have to be completed with any degree of quality or safety. Even when told of this peculiar practice, they never did comprehend the fact that they created more work and hazards for the rest of us. "If you want it done safely, do it yourself," certainly rang true in this case.

### V. Acquiescence

"If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem." Simply going along with something and not speaking up or taking no part in correcting the hazardous situations is acquiescence.

### VI. Complicity

Deliberately breaking rules, laws, and safety regulations is a transgression, and knowingly assisting in the commission of such an unsafe act is complicity.

### VII. Stupidity

The comedian Bill Engvall has made a living out of reminding us of the not-so-smart things we do or have done. He quips, "Stupid people should have to wear signs. That way you won't ask them to do anything." The problem is that we all might have to wear these signs on occasion. There is a tendency to confuse ignorance with stupidity, but actually they have quite different meanings. Ignorance is simply lacking knowledge or comprehension of the thing specified, whereas stupidity is knowing better but doing it anyway.

### Ask the Safety Wiz

*Do you have questions about office safety, workplace hazards, or the safety program? Send your questions to the Safety Wizard at [raymond.geckle@navy.mil](mailto:raymond.geckle@navy.mil) and the Wiz will provide answers in upcoming issues!*

**Dear Wiz:** How do I know if all this safety awareness and communication is really working? - *Perplexed*

**Dear Perplexed:** You can tell safety awareness and communication is working when employees believe that "It can happen to me."

**Dear Wiz:** Do you just randomly create safety questions and names so you can make points on topics that you wouldn't normally have the opportunity to use? - *Zach*

**Dear Zach:** Do I come to your workplace and accuse you of sweeping up French fries that aren't really there?

**Dear Wiz:** I heard that Safety Web site has been updated and now offers a wide array of important safety information. Is the website still <http://ihmdnce/safety-office/index.htm> ? - *Shill*

**Dear Shill:** I see what you're trying to do here, and I admire it.

**Dear Wiz:** How can I fashion a time machine so I can use it to go back in time and prevent myself from having an injury or accident? - *Lost in Time*

**Dear Lost:** You should already know the answer to that question, but if you don't I will give you the answer yesterday.

-----  
It isn't how little you know that gets you in trouble. It's believing that what little you know is enough to keep you out of trouble.