

Safety & Environmental Newsletter

April 2011 Issue



What is Meant by Having a “Healthy Safety Culture”?



NASA's Five Components of a Healthy Safety Culture

Reporting Culture: We report our concerns. Identification of hazards or safety concerns is encouraged, including a system that's easy to use.

Just Culture: We have a sense of fairness. Balances the need for discipline when warranted, with rewards when earned.

Flexible Culture: We change to meet new demands. The organization effectively balances and adapts to changing demands while managing complex technologies and maintaining productivity.

Learning Culture: We learn from our successes and mistakes. Collecting, assessing, and sharing from experience is a priority.

Engaged Culture: Everyone does their part. All members regardless of status or occupation are involved and actively participate in safely accomplishing the mission. The key is to have leaders and employees who demonstrate they value safety by “walking the talk.”

GSFC Safety Culture Survey

GSFC is conducting a Safety Culture Survey from April 18th—May 6th. This survey is open to all NASA employees and contractors are also encouraged to participate. Starting on the 18th, employees can access the survey from the link in the notification email or at:

<https://www.nasacs.org/mainpage.aspx>

This survey provides feedback to the GSFC Center Director on the GSFC Safety Culture with the goal of preventing workplace incidents and injuries.

Points of contact for the survey are:
Pat Hancock, Code 350, 6-5605
Krystal Kennedy, Code 561, 6-1049
Florence Smith, WFF, Code 830, 2518

SAFETY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN April 27

Please block your calendars for the 2011 WFF Safety Awareness Campaign scheduled for April 27th. This year we have a different approach as we are “Standing Down” for one day to focus on SAFETY. There will be multiple presentations throughout the day which will allow opportunity for personnel to attend several sessions. We encourage all personnel to attend at least a couple of these sessions as this is the only time of the year we set aside a few hours to focus on working safely at work and at home. It is time well spent!

What Have You Done For Safety Lately?? Highlights from Code 589, Wallops Systems Software Engineering Branch, Head, Pamela Pittman

This Branch introduces us to a different type of safety and that is software safety. Software must be evaluated for its contribution to the safety of the system throughout the project. This group takes many precautions in the way they try to make software safe. They utilize “what if scenarios” as well as standard operation procedures for testing, and encourages others to do the same.

In addition to Software safety, Occupational safety is a concern for this organization. At each of their staff meetings a safety topic is discussed that involves occupational safety. Either a topic is shared from the Employee Safety committee or a topic of interest is discussed where all present are encouraged to participate. Also a Safety walk through is conducted of offices and labs on a monthly basis. This organization's Safety Awareness is about making sure it doesn't happen, and practicing safety, is paramount to the outcome. According to Pamela Pittman, “Safety is Deliberate it doesn't happen by chance.”



Ssssssssssnake Guide

...to cure some common missssssconceptionsssss...



Copperhead Snake



Black Rat Snake



Hognose Snake

An avid Safety & Environmental Newsletter reader 😊 suggested we do an article to educate employees about the snakes that can possibly be encountered around Wallops Flight Facility so that we need not be afraid of these interesting reptiles or kill them unnecessarily. The Environmental Office consulted wildlife ecologist, Dr. Marilyn Ailes, who contributed the following:

“There are no poisonous snakes on Wallops Island. The only exception is when a truckload of something (e.g. dirt) is brought on the island, and a snake gets included. Even on the mainland, the only poisonous snake known to exist in this area is the copperhead. They are the least venomous of the poisonous snakes in the U.S., usually pretty shy, not really likely to bite, and survivable if they do.

Our most common snake is the black rat, followed by the hognose and then a variety of things like northern water snake, green snake, garter snake, ring-necked snake. If you approach gently, the rat snake is a very docile animal. I've taken them from the wild, let Girl Scouts hand them around a circle, then released them unhurt and apparently unphased. The hognose is fun to mess with. He'll vibrate his tail in the vegetation, trying to sound like a rattler. If that doesn't work, he'll raise up like a cobra and flair his neck. If that still doesn't work, he'll play dead. Of course, a dead snake must be belly up. Turn him over, and he'll try very hard to get that belly back where it belongs but without moving (dead snakes don't move, either). They put out a musk that's pretty stinky, but most snakes do that. The water snake is pretty mean. He'll come after you, but he isn't poisonous. I think they're just trying to intimidate you. The green is fast, a bit suspicious, and likes to hide in bushes. Garter snakes are pretty laid back; I've had them in Scout troops, too. The ring-necked is tiny, usually about 6 inches, slim, and usually scared. But they're cute, if snakes can be called that.

One point about snakes: they eat rodents (except the ring-necked, who is too small). Rodents do a lot more damage than snakes ever did, including carrying such diseases as plague and hantavirus. So snakes are actually beneficial to humans.”



Northern Water Snake



Green Snake



Garter Snake



Ring-necked Snake

For more information and additional images of snakes in Virginia please visit:
http://www.virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com/reptiles/snakes/snakes_of_virginia.htm



Celebrate Earth Day! May 11, 2011!!



In a perfect world everyone would view every day as Earth Day, as well it should be. To that end, the Environmental Office is asking for the Wallops community to make written pledges declaring what they will do to help the planet for the next year. No pledge is too small or insignificant.

For example: “I, _____, pledge to carry a reusable water bottle with me to cut down on my reliance on plastic water bottles.”



Come make your pledge outside the cafeteria on Wednesday, May 11th from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Each pledge will be written on a leaf and displayed as a tree on the bulletin board in the cafeteria. Pledges will be picked at random for the next year to run at the bottom of the Environmental page of this newsletter. After making a pledge you can help yourself to a snow cone or solar s'more! You can also have the chance to determine your carbon footprint!

