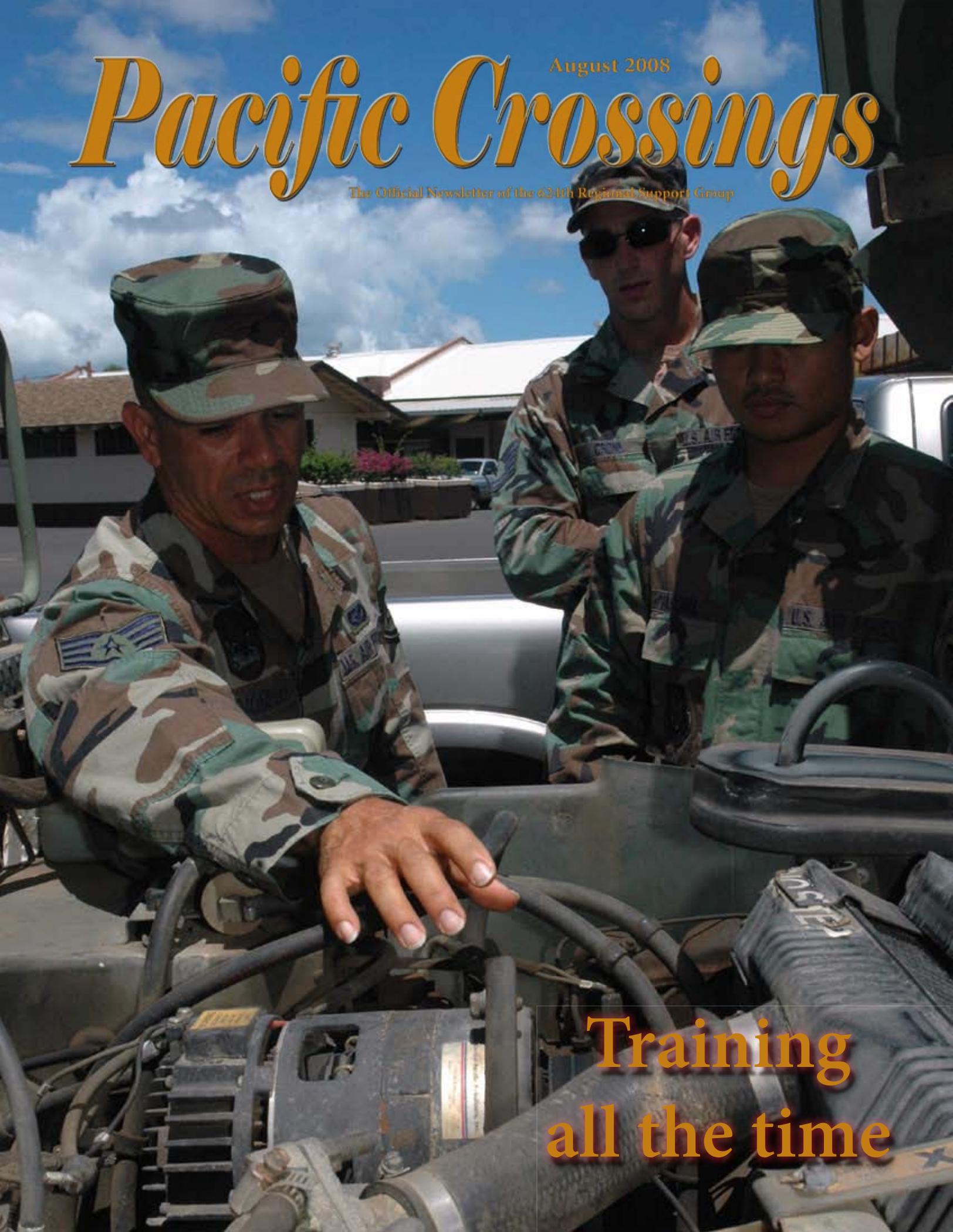


Pacific Crossings

August 2008

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group



**Training
all the time**

Safety always

As summer winds down, vigilance is critical

By Col. John Morris
624th Regional Support Group
Commander

624th Regional Support Group leaders, wingmen and fellow warrior Airmen: I wanted to take a moment to talk about safety awareness amongst my fellow Airmen.

We are still in the midst of the 101 Critical Days of Summer and we, the US Air Force, have already lost over 50 fellow Airmen in accidents, with the vast majority of them traffic related.

Forty-three fellow Airmen died in vehicle related accidents so far in Fiscal Year '08 to include their own personal vehicles, motorcycles and 4-wheelers. In addition, 11 more fellow Airmen have died as a result of sports and recreation-related accidents to include swimming, diving, physical fitness, etc.

Within the 624th Regional Support Group, we have had a couple of minor incidents over the past year, but no major damage to private or government property and no injuries incurred.

Safety and training are my two main priorities. I cannot stress enough "Safety First!"

Our Airmen are our most important resource and are the backbone of the US Air Force. It is critical that we advocate, demonstrate and enforce optimum safety awareness at all time with our Airmen, our fellow wingmen and warriors.

I ask that each and every commander, officer, senior noncommissioned officer and section leader advocate "Safety First" on a continual basis to their assigned Airmen.

Please remind our Airmen to wear their seat belts at all times when operating vehicles, do not drink and drive, maintain situational awareness at all times, watch out for pedestrians and adjust their speed to local environmental conditions and speed limits.

Please remind our Airmen to be careful

when active in sports and recreational activities, such as snorkeling, swimming, diving, surfing, playing sports, etc.

Keep in mind common "Safety First" practices such as never swim alone. Do not swim if you do not feel well and swim in areas where lifeguards are present if at all possible. Wear proper safety equipment when participating in sports activities, particularly contact sports and make sure you keep yourself hydrated.

In addition, we need to stress "Safety First" in the workplace and while on duty.

Please remind our Airmen to use and follow all required checklists, technical orders, and Air Force Instructions as may be required as part of their duties.

Do not cut corners to get the job done quickly – be careful and take as much time as may be needed to do the job right and safely.

Assess the risks of the job you are performing and utilize Operational Risk Management principles to reduce the risk factor to the lowest level possible.

Use the proper tools and equipment at all times to accomplish your job or mission. If armed, carry the weapon properly and in a safe manner to prevent possible accidental discharge of the weapon and wear proper safety gear and boots when palletizing equipment.

As I have stated before, our Airmen are our most important resource! It is our responsibility to implement, instill and enforce proper safety procedures within this group so as to ensure optimum safety for our Airmen.

We must exercise "Safety First" in all we do, look out for the safety of our fellow wingmen, take care of each other, and accomplish our missing taskings in a safe, secure manner.

CHARLIE-MIKE - Continue the Mission!

Pacific Crossings

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Action Line

The Action line is your direct line to the 624th Regional Support Group Commander. If you have worked through normal channels and are not satisfied with the answer, the Action Line is your opportunity to ask questions or make suggestions about the subjects of concern to the 624th RSG community.

You may contact the action line at jennifer.chamberlin@us.af.mil.

Please include your name and phone number in case additional information is required. Action lines of general interest will be published in Pacific Crossings, and others will be answered by phone.

On the Cover

Tech. Sgt. Adam Cronk observes Staff Sgt. Tommy Anduha explain to Airman 1st Class Michael Pascual the engine components of a HMVEE. They're all heavy equipment specialists with the 624th Civil Engineer Squadron at Hickam.

Photo by
Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel

Relaying for Life

Members of the 624th Regional Support Group and their friends and family came out to support the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life event July 12, 2008. The annual fund raiser for cancer research takes place in communities across the country. Capt. Joyce Gill, 624th RSG executive officer, raised more than \$1,000 for the cause.

Photo - Master Sgt. Steve Adachi and friend Laurie, Dalton with his mother Captain Gill and Maj. Sandra Hogan, ret.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jennie Chamberlin





answers

The Top 10

USERRA Questions

1 What are the uniformed services? USERRA defines the uniformed services as the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, and the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service. The Army National Guard and Air National Guard qualify when performing active duty for training, inactive duty training, or full-time National Guard duty. Finally, during a period of war or national emergency the President can designate any other category of persons to be a “uniformed service” for purposes of USERRA.

2 What is “service in the uniformed services”? The term ‘service in the uniformed services’ means the performance of duty on a voluntary or involuntary basis in a uniformed service under competent authority and includes active duty, active duty for training, inactive duty training, full-time National Guard duty, a period for which a person is absent from a position of employment for the purpose of an examination to determine the fitness of the person for any such duty, and a period for which a person is absent from a position of employment for the purpose of performing funeral honors duty as authorized by section 12503 of title 10 or section 115 of title 32.

3 Does USERRA apply to voluntary service? Yes. Please refer to the answer in question 2 above.

4 How much notice am I required to give to my employer, prior to a period of service? We (ESGR) recommend that reservists and National Guard members give as much advance notice as possible, but USERRA does not specify any minimum period of notice. Circumstances arise, especially in a mobilization scenario, when the individual has very little advance notice from military authorities. USERRA’s legislative history indicates that Congress intended that the lateness of the notice to the civilian employer should not defeat the right to reemployment, especially when the individual had little or no notice from the military.

5 Am I required to provide my employer a copy of my military orders when I give notice of an upcoming period of service? No. USERRA imposes no such requirement. We (ESGR) recommend that National Guard and Reserve personnel provide to their employers such documentation as is readily available. Your civilian employer is permitted and encouraged to call your commanding officer with questions about your service.

6 I take a lot of time off for military training and service. Now, I have been asked to perform service at a time that is particularly inconvenient for my employer. Is my employer permitted to veto my request for military leave? No.

You are only required to give your employer notice, not to obtain your employer’s permission. However, as a matter of courtesy, we (ESGR) recommend that you phrase your notice as a request for permission. The employer has no right to veto the timing, frequency, duration, etc. of your military training and service. However, the employer is permitted to contact your commanding officer. It is Department of Defense (DOD) policy that the commanding officer should work with your employer to resolve conflicts of this kind. The commanding officer will accede to your employer’s reasonable request to reschedule military training, unless doing so would detract from unit readiness and mission accomplishment.

If the timing of this training period presents a real problem for your employer, the commanding officer will try to adjust the schedule, but please understand that such rescheduling must be kept to a minimum. National Guard and Reserve units train together, and they must go to war together. The training periods are scheduled so that the unit can be trained together. If you perform training at a different time, you may miss important training that the rest of the unit received. As a result, you may not learn how to perform some critical task, resulting in additional casualties and endangering the accomplishment of the mission.

Under the “Total Force Policy,” our nation is more dependent than ever

USERRA continued page 5

USERRA *continued from page 4*

before upon the National Guard and Reserve for essential military readiness. The National Guard and Reserve make up almost half of the total pool of available military personnel.

7 **Is my employer permitted to make me find a replacement for the time that I will be away from work performing service?** No. You are responsible for giving the employer advance notice, if possible, but not for rearranging your schedule or finding a replacement.

8 **Is my employer permitted to make me use vacation for my military training or service?** No. If you want to use vacation, you have the right to do so, but it is unlawful for your employer to make you use vacation.

9 **Is my employer required to pay me for the period that I am away from work performing military training or service?** USERRA does not require an employer to pay an individual for time not worked due to service. Another Federal law (5 U.S.C. 6323) gives Federal civilian employees the right to 120 hours per fiscal year of paid military leave.

About 40 states have similar laws for state and local government employees. If you are exempt from the Fair

Labor Standards Act (FLSA) overtime rules (because you are a manager, for example), the employer is not permitted to make a deduction for a part of a pay period missed because of temporary military leave. See 29 Code of Federal Regulations 541.118(4). This is an FLSA requirement, not a USERRA requirement.

10 **Is my employer required to provide me other benefits of employment while I am away from work performing service?** If and to the extent that your employer provides benefits to employees who have been furloughed (laid off) or to employees on some kind of non-military leave (jury leave, educational leave, etc.), your employer must provide similar benefits to employees who are away from work performing service in the uniformed services.

An employee who is away from work performing service in the uniformed services is entitled to elect continued health plan coverage through the civilian job. If the period of service is less than 31 days, the employer is permitted to charge the employee only the employee share (if any) of the cost of the coverage. If the period of service is 31 days or more, the employer is permitted (but not required) to charge the employee up to 102% of the entire premium, including the part that the employer normally pays in the case of active employees.

Personnel Briefs

HQ ARPC personnel briefing

A team of specialists from HQ Air Reserve Personnel Center in Denver, Colo., will be briefing Hickam-based members on subject matter pertaining to retirement, entitlements, participation, points, officer promotions and the Virtual Personnel Center - Guard/Reserve on Saturday, Aug. 2, Memorial Theater.

The team will entertain all questions you may have.

A separate briefing on Sunday, Aug. 3, will be held for all officers regarding officer promotions.

Hands-on training on the VPC-GR will be offered by SMSgt Melody Mohigh at the 48th APS training room on Saturday at 1300, Sunday at 8:30-10:00 a.m., 10-11:30 a.m. and 1:15-2:30 p.m. There is a limit of eight per session. Please contact Senior Master Sgt. Seitz at 449-3393 for reservations.

Arranging family care needs

All Air Force members with families will have family care arrangements that reasonably cover all situations, both short and long term. Single parents, dual military couples with family members and members with civilian spouses who have unique family situations, as determined by the commander or first sergeant, are required to develop a written plan (AF Form 357) to be maintained by the commander or first sergeant. It will detail and provide a smooth, rapid transfer of responsibilities to designees during the absence of the member.

Unit commanders are required to brief unit members on Family Care responsibilities yearly. Those that currently have a Family Care plan must review and recertify these plans with the First Sergeant and/or Commander yearly.

Military Personnel Flight hours

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

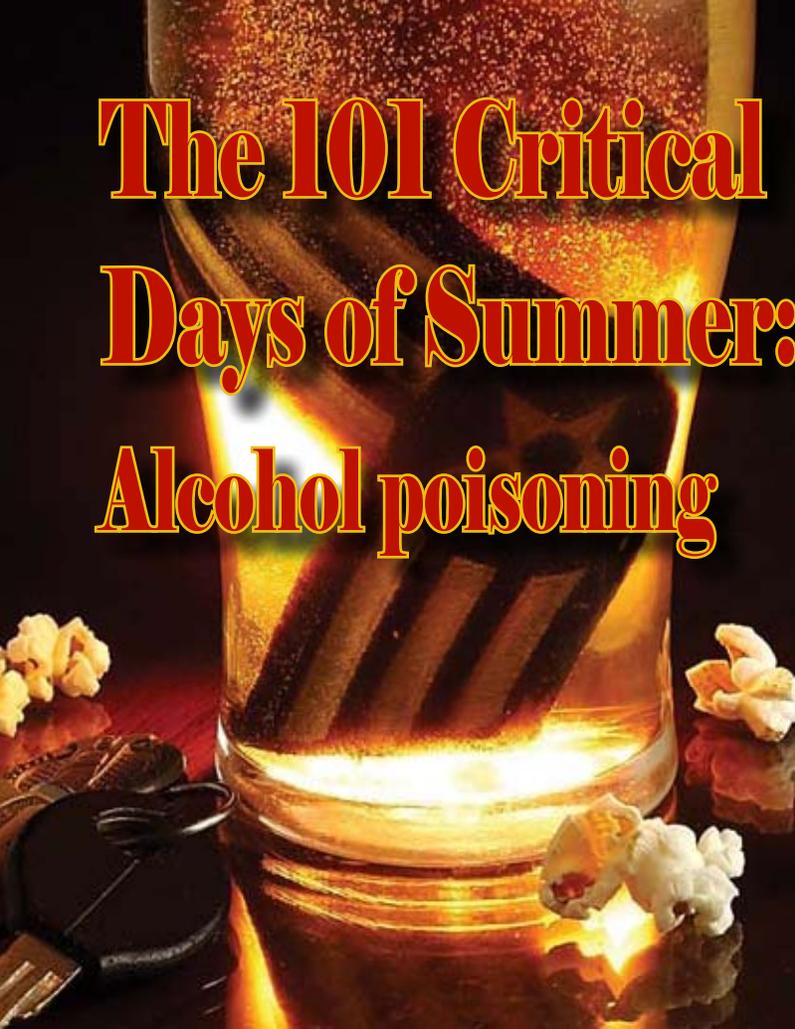
DRILL WEEKENDS

Saturday-
Open hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Closed for in-processing - 7-10 a.m.

Sunday:
Open hours: 7 a.m. - 1 p.m.
2:30 - 4 p.m.

Closed for training: 1-2:30 p.m.

If an ID card is required, please call before coming to MPF to check if DEERS is up and running. This will alleviate your driving all the way to Hickam and DEERS system will be down



The 101 Critical Days of Summer: Alcohol poisoning

624th Regional Support Group
Safety Office

Summer and drinking go hand-in-hand for many people. Unfortunately, not everyone knows his or her limit. It is all too possible that alcohol poisoning may occur as a result of the rapid intake of alcohol or binge drinking. This high amount of alcohol can lead to seizures, choking, an irregular heart beat and even death. Deaths caused by alcohol poisoning are a sad reality, but perhaps even sadder is the fact that these deaths are entirely preventable. Alcohol rehab at a qualified alcohol rehabilitation center is often beneficial to those suffering from alcohol addiction.

Choking is one common cause of death among those with alcohol poisoning. The nerves that control breathing and a person's gag reflex can be affected by alcohol. Too much alcohol will halt these bodily functions altogether, which most often leads to choking and possibly death if vomiting occurs. Vomiting often occurs with excessive alcohol intake. Excessive alcohol intake is common among those suffering from alcoholism. Those desiring to obtain freedom from this powerful drug should seek treatment for alcoholism at a drug and alcohol rehab center.

It is especially dangerous for someone to pass out while under the influence. The blood alcohol content in the body can still rise if someone is asleep or passed out. If someone you know is unconscious or asleep after consuming large amounts of alcohol, attempt to resuscitate them and do not leave them alone.

ALCOHOL POISONING - Steps to take in an emergency and what to watch for

1. Call 911 or a local poison control center if you think someone you know has alcohol poisoning.
2. Stay with the person. Never leave a severely intoxicated person alone.
3. Turn the person onto their side to prevent choking if vomiting occurs.
4. Monitor breathing levels. If you know CPR, be prepared to use this skill in case of an emergency.
5. Continually try to revive the person if they are passed out.

SIGNS OF ALCOHOL POISONING

This form of poisoning not only occurs as a result of drinking popular alcoholic beverages, it can also occur when someone consumes ethyl alcohol, methyl alcohol or isopropyl alcohol. Common signs someone you know may have alcohol poisoning include:

- Confusion
- Slow reflexes
- Unable to communicate effectively
- Slurring in speech
- Rapid pulse
- Feeling sick, vomiting
- Dehydration
- Unconsciousness

- Moist, clammy skin
- Inability to walk
- Pale, blue colored skin

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL POISONING?

The effects of alcohol poisoning can be devastating, especially if the drinker becomes unconscious. In fact, numerous deaths have occurred as a result of an unconscious person choking on their own vomit or breathing in vomit. Possible effects of alcohol poisoning include:

- Irregular heart beat
- Choking (from vomiting)
- Coma
- Decrease in body temperature (hypothermia)
- Brain damage
- Seizure
- Strange breathing patterns
- Inhalation of vomit causing a halt in breathing patterns (asphyxiation)
- Death

Alcohol poisoning may be harmful, but the consequences of alcoholism can be even more devastating. If you or a loved one suffers from alcohol addiction, seek alcoholic treatment at a drug and alcohol rehab center today.



From Iraq to Guam

In appreciation for employer support during his recent deployment, Senior Airman Benjamin Tedpahogo presents an American flag flown over Iraq with certificate to Michael Benito and Kathy Sgro, Payless Supermarkets general managers, July 3, 2008. While deployed to Sather Air Base, Iraq, Airman Tedpahogo received care packages from his fellow employees at Payless Supermarkets which he shared with the rest of the 44th Aerial Port Squadron team members stationed with him in the desert.

44th APS courtesy photo

Supporting the Employer who supports you

Employer Support for Guard and Reserve

Nominate your employer for the "Patriot" award. The first step in having your employer considered for recognition as an outstanding employer is to submit a Patriot Award nomination.

For both speed of processing and accuracy in the nomination process, nominate your employers online at www.esgr.mil.

Nominations may also be sent to ESGR by mail using the attached nomination form.

Every employer nominated will

receive a Patriot Award certificate and accompanying lapel pin. Your state or local ESGR Committee can help you arrange the presentation of the award to your employer.

Tell us why your employer is great. When completing the employer recognition form, take a few moments to explain why your employer deserves to be recognized. Your local ESGR committee will review your explanation when selecting nominees for higher-level employer support awards.

It may lead to bigger things. ESGR reviews all award nominations for con-



sideration for higher levels of recognition at the Local, National, and State levels



Visiting Chiefs

Above - XXXX engages in a 44th Aerial Port Squadron rite of passage for newcomers as Chief Master Sgt. Patricia Thornton, 4th Air Force Command Chief and Chief Master Sgt. Troy McIntosh, Air Force Reserve Command command chief. This was the first visit by an AFRC command chief to Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

Right - Chief Master Sgt. Thornton coins Senior Airman Vanessa Aguon, 44th Aerial Port Squadron for SrA Vanessa Aguon was coined for leading the Airman's Creed recital at the start of the Chief's Enlisted Call July 27, 2008.

44th APS courtesy photo



UTA Schedule

Hickam

August 2-3
September 6-7
October 4-5
November 3-4

Andersen

August 23-24
September 20-21
October 18-19
November 17-18



*By Master Sgt. Leony Macapagal
624th Civil Engineer Squadron
First Sergeant*

According to Air Force Instruction 36-2903 Men's hair is limited to one and 1/4 inches in bulk. Women's hair is limited to three inches in bulk.

Bulk is how far the hair protrudes from the scalp on the top and sides. Note: A pony-tail or "bun" is part of the bulk measurement.