

DID YOU KNOW?

USMC SAFETY & FORCE PRESERVATION



JUNE 2011

SUMMER SAFETY

The beginning of summer typically means it's time to play ball, go fishing, hiking, camping, or simply relax and have a backyard barbecue with family and friends. Whatever you're into, apply risk management when planning each and every summertime activity. Most of the things that can go wrong in off-duty activities are easy to anticipate and avoid. A few smart decisions go a long way toward maintaining our Marine Corps combat readiness. Remember, our forces are affected just as drastically by an off-duty mishap as by one occurring at work or in combat. The summertime season, from Memorial Day to Labor Day, are typically when more off-duty mishaps and traffic deaths occur than any other time of the year. It's a period when many Marines are on the road traveling from one duty station to the next, riding or buying motorcycles with little to no recent experience, visiting family, attending beach parties, cookouts and other summer events. Combining summer fun with alcohol consumption, hot weather, not enough rest and high risk activities is a receipt for disaster. As a Marine, you have the responsibility to prepare for and go into combat at any time. At home, you have a mission on a more personal level ... to be there for your family, friends, fellow Marines and to prevent tragedies that occur when people don't manage risk and make poor decisions.



One tool commanders can use to assist in summertime mishap prevention is the Ground Climate Assessment Survey System (GCASS). Surveys and Issue papers at www.semperfisurveys.org include PMV, Rec/Off Duty, Drinking & Driving, and many

Did You Know?

The Leading Causes of Summer Injuries & Deaths in the Marine Corps Are:

- Motorcycles
- Drowning / Water Activities
- Water Sports
- Team & Contact Sports
- Outdoor Recreation

other surveys that can be utilized by commanders for anonymous feedback from their unit or command. Surveys are specifically designed and tailored to help spot deficiencies and plan for pre-summer safety events and operational pauses. SemperFiSurveys.org also provides Issue Papers, which highlight and provide analysis of current problems identified in recent anonymous survey answers. In particular, Issue Paper #33 identifies the Top Ten summertime recreational and off-duty activities in which Marines participate, potentially injuring themselves or others.

SEMPER RIDE

- Are your Marines trained to ride?
- Are they riding within their capabilities?
- Do they have the proper PPE?
- Visit SemperRide.com for more...



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www.marines.mil/unit/safety/Pages/welcome

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PRIVATE MOTOR VEHICLES

The Marine Corps lost 26 Marines in 4-wheel PMV mishaps in FY10 and has already had 16 PMV-4 fatalities in FY11. Alcohol, speed, fatigue, lack of seatbelt use, and improper vehicle maintenance are all key components to the loss of our Marines in these mishaps. Seatbelt use, particularly, is trending in the wrong direction. It is critical that all leaders continue to stress the importance of safe driving to your Marines throughout the summer driving season.

- Almost half of our PMV fatalities this FY are a direct result of Marines not wearing a seatbelt.
- 1/4 of those were ejected from the vehicle and a seatbelt would have probably saved their life.

HEAT INJURIES

In FY10 alone, a total of 83 heat-related injuries were reported throughout the Marine Corps. Of these, 35 (42%) were linked to the following physical conditioning events: physical fitness test (7), combat fitness test (4), physical training (15), endurance course (4), confidence/obstacle course (5).

The most common contributing factors to heat-related injuries are previous heat injury, alcohol consumption, use of dietary supplements, fatigue, and sunburn. Heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, and heat rash are possible when you become overexerted in the heat. Put your health first to enjoy the summer and recognize the signs of heat stress to minimize risk and prevent fatal injuries.

Heat Cramps

Heavy sweating, painful spasms usually in the leg or abdomen muscles. Provide cool water, shade, and monitor.

Heat Exhaustion

Nausea, dizziness, weakness, headache, pale and moist skin, heavy perspiration, normal or low body temperature, weak pulse, dilated pupils, disorientation, fainting spells. Provide water, shade, elevate feet and seek immediate medical attention.

Heat Stroke

Headache, dizziness, confusion, rapid/strong pulse, and hot, dry skin, high body temperature of 106 or higher possibly leading to vascular collapse, coma, and death. Move to a cool shaded area, soak victim with water and fan, elevate feet and seek immediate medical attention, this is a medical emergency.

Did You Know?

Most heat injuries occur during physical training and hot weather operations, when Individuals:

- are not properly hydrated and/or acclimated
- are exposed to extreme heat
- are in Mission-Orientated Protective Posture (MOPP) gear or other personal protective clothing required by the job
- are inside closed spaces, such as inside an armored vehicle
- wearing body armor



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WATER/BOAT SAFETY

On the Boat

- Always use approved personal floatation devices (life jackets), and make sure your passengers do as well. The U.S. Coast Guard estimates nearly 9 of 10 drowning victims were not wearing one.
- Don't drink while boating. More than half of the people who drown in boating accidents had been drinking.
- Before you launch, tell someone where you're headed and when you'll be back at the dock. In an emergency, rescuers will need to know where to start looking.
- Keep learning about boat and water safety. Groups including the U.S. Power Squadron and the Coast Guard Auxiliary teach classes in navigation, weather and emergency procedures.
- Check the forecast and watch the weather while you're underway. If you see or hear a storm, get back to land.

In the Pool or on the Beach

- Always have a first-aid kit and emergency phone contacts close by.
- Adults should be trained in CPR.
- Always use approved personal floatation devices for children (life jackets).
- Remove toys from in and around the pool when not in use. They can attract children to the pool.
- Never leave a child alone near water – at the pool, the beach or in the tub.
- Enroll children over age three in swimming lessons taught by qualified instructors. But keep in mind that lessons don't make your child "drown-proof."
- Older children risk drowning when they overestimate their swimming ability or underestimate the water depth.

HIKING/CAMPING

Before heading into the wilderness, properly inventory supplies and equipment you may need, such as a backpack, first-aid kits, a flashlight, a compass, maps, and a whistle in case you get lost. Always hike with a buddy or a group of at least four. In case someone is hurt, one person can stay with the victim while two go for help. Wear absorbent clothing to prevent hypothermia in case of exposure to water or cold temperature.

Plan Your Trip Carefully

Always tell someone where you are going and when you will return. Learn how to use a map and a compass before you hike. It is easy to become disoriented in the desert where many landmarks and rock formations look similar.

Carry Plenty of Water

No dependable source of water exists in desert regions. One gallon of water per person, per day is the absolute minimum that should be carried. When planning a hike, remember that water weighs approximately 8 pounds per gallon. When the water is half gone, it is time to turn back. Don't forget extra water for your vehicle. Do not ration your water.

Dress Properly

Layered clothing slows dehydration and minimizes exposure. Good hiking shoes, loose fitting natural-fiber clothing, a wide brimmed hat, sunglasses and sunscreen are a must. Desert temperatures can reach over 90° Fahrenheit and drop below 50° Fahrenheit in one day. Summer temperatures can reach 125° Fahrenheit in some locations.

