



U.S. ARMY
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U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

FROM THE COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR

ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG



The Safety Gamble

After the nationwide frenzy surrounding last month's gigantic Powerball jackpot, I started thinking about odds. The average American stands a one in nearly 176,000,000 — that's *176 million* — shot of winning any Powerball drawing within his or her lifetime. Yet countless people, including Soldiers and Family members, flock to convenience stores and other lottery outlets week after week, believing they'll pick the lucky numbers. What's puzzling to me, though, is that even while holding on to this far-flung hope, many think an accident could never happen to them.

Turns out, the lifetime odds of dying in an accident hit a little closer to home.

- In a car: one in 242
- From falls: one in 269
- As a pedestrian: one in 610
- By drowning: one in 1,028
- On a motorcycle: one in 1,295

Those odds increase in direct correlation with indiscipline. Riding without a helmet or driving without a seat belt is a sure way to get your proverbial ticket punched should an accident occur. Driving, riding and swimming are just a few of the activities that make alcohol a losing bet. And speeding, whether it's on the road or one of our nation's many waterways, can make your luck run out even faster.

The fact is, many of our Soldiers gamble with their safety daily in ways both big and small. As a leader, it's your duty to know and address the who and how. There's no doubt you'll counsel the Soldier who's busted taking his helmet off just outside the gate or caught leaving the club drunk. But what about the one who routinely drives "just" 10 or 15 mph above the speed limit? There aren't degrees of indiscipline; it's a violation of the standards, plain and simple, and every instance of it must be dealt with accordingly.

We're now in our Army's deadliest time of year for accidents. Time off, PCS moves and other various events that have Soldiers away from work expose them to more risk. They deserve to enjoy their downtime, but we must ensure they do it wisely. Safety stand-downs, weekend safety briefings and informal conversations about personal risk management are all proven to have an impact on Soldier safety. Engaging with them more often, encouraging them to look out for one another and setting the example yourself can only increase the odds of everyone arriving back to your formation safe and alive.

There's no better time to start than now. June is National Safety Month, and the USACR/Safety Center has put together a media package to help focus your summer safety efforts. Informational articles, public service announcements from Army leadership, posters and other materials are all available at <https://safety.army.mil> for your convenience. The annual Safe

Summer Campaign and Off Duty Safety Awareness Presentation are also live online, so there's no excuse for not having a robust summer safety program. We've made it easy — it's up to you to make it happen!

I've said it before, but it's critically important that we make Soldiers understand safety isn't a downer. Nothing kills the fun more than tragedy, a scene that's played out far too many times among Soldiers and their buddies off duty. Summer is a time for laughter and memories, not tears and memorial services for lives cut too short. Be a leader, set the example and your Soldiers will follow.

Thank you all for your hard work every day!

Army Safe is Army Strong!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard D. Stidley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

Rick Stidley
Command Sergeant Major
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center