



FROM THE  
**ARMY COMBAT READINESS CENTER**



### Independence Day 2016

Summer is a poignant time of year for our Army. We celebrate not only our birthday as America's oldest military institution, but also the anniversary of our Nation's independence and emergence as the world's leader for democracy. Those legacies continue to thrive because of the work you do and sacrifices you make every day. Thank you.

As you embark on this long weekend, make safety part of your plans. We lost five Soldiers to accidents during last year's July 4 break — our deadliest Independence Day weekend since 2002. All occurred off duty, with most involving private motor vehicles.

Indiscipline kills, and we must be acutely aware of it to stay safe. Even the most responsible leader or Soldier is susceptible to momentary lapses of judgment, whether it's speeding behind the wheel, failing to wear personal protective equipment on a ride, or partaking in "just one" alcoholic drink on the water.

Evaluate your circumstances and environment and then make appropriate risk decisions. "Slow down," "buckle up," "firearms and alcohol don't mix," and "don't drink and drive/boat" are all overly familiar refrains, but time-tested to actually save lives. Instead of looking at safety as a downer, we should embrace it as the best possible way to ensure we survive to enjoy another day.

Wherever your plans take you this July 4, remember our Nation, your families and your battle buddies are counting on you to make smart decisions. Play it safe in everything you do.

Army Safe is Army Strong!

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