



THIS MONTH OCTOBER 2015



Winter Road Rules

STEVE BISHEL
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Whether you're a newly licensed driver or an experienced 88M with a "gazillion" miles logged, reduced traction from snow, ice and rain can make driving during the winter months especially dangerous. However, while winter weather does pose additional risks to drivers, they don't have to result in an accident. There are several things drivers can do to operate their tactical vehicles safely when weather conditions take a turn for the worst.

Maintenance

Conduct maintenance checks per the preventive maintenance

checks and services in your vehicle's technical manual. It is especially important to ensure the antifreeze level and protection is adequate for the winter environment. Also, make sure the windshield washer reservoir is filled with a washer fluid that provides proper cold weather protection. Because visibility is vital for safe driving, it's also a good idea to have new wipers installed. In addition, make sure your battery is in good condition and all lights — especially headlights and tail lights — are working properly.

Operation

To improve visibility, snow and

ice should be cleared from a vehicle's windows, mirrors, hood, roof, turn signals, tail lights and headlights before operation. If you're driving on ice and snow, reduce your speed and maintain a safe stopping distance. When climbing hills, accelerate slightly as you approach the hill and maintain a steady speed going up. This will allow the momentum of the vehicle to help carry you up the hill. Check the vehicle's TM for the proper gear settings for climbing and descending hills on ice or snow. Also be aware of black ice, which is an invisible, thin layer of ice on road surfaces, including bridges and

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overpasses. (Editor's note: For more on black ice, see the info box below.) Of course, you should always wear a seat belt and drive defensively regardless of the weather conditions.

Braking

Operators must know what type of brake is on their vehicle so they can use the proper technique for stopping on ice or snow. For vehicles with conventional hydraulic brakes (no antilock brakes), use threshold braking by applying the brakes just short of lockup and then easing off the brake pedal slightly. Sudden braking will cause wheels to lock and the vehicle to slide out of control.

To stop a vehicle equipped with ABS, apply firm, steady pressure to the brake pedal. Do not pump brakes on a vehicle equipped with ABS. For vehicles equipped with air brakes, apply light, steady pressure; do not pump the brakes. For vehicles equipped with engine brakes, do not apply the engine brake when operating on slick surfaces (ice, snow or rain). Refer to the TM for the type of brakes on your vehicle and specific recommended operations.

Black ice — a thin sheet of ice on a dark roadway — is extremely dangerous because it's hard for drivers to detect before they're actually on it. Black ice forms when light rain or drizzle falls on a road surface below 32 F or when super-cooled fog droplets accumulate on bridges and overpasses. A roadway covered with black ice appears wet when the ambient temperature is below freezing.

Drivers must use extreme caution when driving on black ice. Vehicles that hit black ice

FYI

The U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center's Driver's Training Toolbox has a series of winter driving presentations which can assist you in conducting training. It can be found on the USACRC website at <https://safety.army.mil/driverstrainingtoolbox>.

Tires

Make sure your vehicle's tires have adequate tread depth — preferably 50 percent or more of the tread remaining — if you plan to operate in winter conditions. Most tactical vehicles have a mud/sand/snow recommended pressure for added traction in these conditions. Refer to the TM for the appropriate pressure for your vehicle's tires. For vehicles equipped with the Central Tire Inflation System, this would be the sand or snow setting. When no longer operating in snow, tire pressures will need to be increased per the TM.

Tire chains

Tire chains are to be used on your vehicle when conditions (ice and

have greatly reduced traction, very little braking capability and extremely poor directional control — all problems that heighten the possibility of skidding. Ideally, vehicles should not be driven in black ice conditions. However, if the mission must go on, drivers should reduce their speed, accelerate slowly, increase the following distance between vehicles, brake very lightly and make all turns gradually and slowly.

snow) require additional traction such as in mountainous terrain. Select the appropriate tire chain as specified for your vehicle. If you are unfamiliar with using tire chains, it is recommended you conduct a trial fit on how to install and remove them before the start of a mission. Then you will already have the experience of using them when they are required.

Tire chains are designed to fit snugly; however, you should allow for some movement of the chain on the tire. Tighten chains by hand, rather than tools, to reduce the possibility of over-tightening. Also make sure to carry appropriate straps for tightening the chains if they are loose. Straps are listed by NSN below:

- 15 inches long, stretches 20 to 30 inches — NSN 5340-01-029-9084
- 21 inches long, stretches 26 to 42 inches — NSN 5340-01-231-6015
- 31 inches long, stretches 36 to 42 inches — NSN 5340-01-029-9085

Reference the appropriate TM for installation and restrictions regarding tire chains. When no longer operating in snow, the chains must be removed to avoid damage to the tires or vehicle.

Extreme cold

Depending upon the type of system, your vehicle may have a winterization kit that can be installed for operation in extreme cold. Refer to the vehicle's TM for information on the installation, operation and maintenance of this additional equipment.

Winter weather conditions can challenge any driver. Follow the suggested guidelines above when operating your tactical vehicle in snow and ice and you should arrive at your destination safely. ■

THE REIT COMES



- Treat every weapon as if it is loaded.
- Handle every weapon with care.
- Identify the target before you fire.
- Never point the muzzle at anything you don't intend to shoot.
- Keep the weapon on safe and your finger off the trigger until you intend to fire.

READY ...OR NOT?

Ready ... or Not is a call to action for leaders, Soldiers, Army Civilians and Family members to assess their "readiness" for what lies ahead—the known as well as the unknown.

Throughout our professional and personal lives, events happen all around us. We are often able to shape the outcome of those events, but many times we're not. Navigating life's challenges is all about decision-making.

So are **YOU** ready ... or not?



<https://safety.army.mil>



The Fix

RETIRED SGT. 1ST CLASS CRAIG A. DAILEY
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Redstone Arsenal, Alabama

To be honest, I haven't always been the poster child for riding safely. I've been fortunate enough to survive my experiences and learn from them, but not everyone is so lucky. It's frustrating to see preliminary loss reports in my inbox telling me we've lost another Soldier in a motorcycle accident. Fortunately, this is a problem that can be fixed; but it's going to take leadership, responsibility, accountability and discipline.

Leadership

As a leader, I always knew when one of my Soldiers made a large purchase because they couldn't do it without talking about it. My platoon leader (who was also a rider) and I always had the team leaders ensure their Soldiers were financially capable and mature enough to buy the bike. After that, we ensured they were sent to rider training.

It's the same approach we take in paratrooper training. As a jumpmaster, I'd never allow a trooper onto the aircraft, much less exit it, without personally inspecting and verifying the equipment was functionally safe and properly



secured. How many paratroopers exit aircraft every year without a fatality? Airborne accidents happen and people die. That's a risk we face, but we mitigate it as best we can. Why can't we approach reducing the risks involved with riding motorcycles the same way?

Responsibility

Riders and leaders both bear responsibility for senseless motorcycle accidents. In most cases, it was their own stupidity, ignorance and inexperience that killed them. I get angry having to say it, but some people aren't mature enough to care for themselves. Once again, senior leaders are going to have to add another responsibility to their already overloaded plate. However, there are strategies for that.

First, as Soldiers return from deployments with pockets full of

“Riders and leaders both bear responsibility for senseless motorcycle accidents.”

money, strict adherence to safety regulations must be enforced. I believe Soldiers should have to turn over the keys to their bikes until they've obtained their Motorcycle Safety Foundation Basic RiderCourse certification. Then, a copy of their certification needs to become a part of their platoon sergeant's leader book. Within 12 to 18 months, they should be required to show their Experienced RiderCourse card. And that leads to the next issue — accountability.

Accountability

Just because your DA Form 348 qualifies you to drive a motor pool full of vehicles doesn't mean you can waltz in and drive one you're

Did You Know?

Army Regulation 385-10, The Army Safety Program, Chapter 11-7, Driver education, and Chapter 11-9, Motorcycle safety, define the Army's motorcycle training and personal protective equipment requirements. To view the document in its entirety, visit http://www.apd.army.mil/pdf/files/r385_10.pdf.



“Accountability must include tough discipline — and that hasn’t always happened.”

not certified on. No motor officer would risk his career by authorizing Soldiers to drive vehicles they’re not qualified to operate because he knows he’d be held accountable. We hold Soldiers with automobiles accountable by checking their travel plans and inspecting their vehicles before four-day weekends. Why don’t we do the same for Soldiers with motorcycles? We have rules, but there’s no accountability above the rider’s level. If we’re holding riders accountable for their actions, then we must hold ourselves accountable for ensuring they’re qualified to ride.

Discipline

Accountability must include tough discipline — and that hasn’t always happened. For example, one commander I served under mandated all motorcycles be stopped at the gates and their riders inspected for personal protective equipment and MSF training cards. However, riders found in violation weren’t cited like they would be if they were driving under the influence. Instead, they were turned

around and sent back into the fray lacking the knowledge and equipment to ride safely or according to regulations. Leadership should’ve required the rider to surrender his keys and impound the bike until the command issued a memorandum stating the Soldier has been disciplined (post traffic fine or Article 15 for failure to follow an order) and trained.

If leaders truly care about Soldiers, they must get tough to stop these senseless deaths. It’s a terrible loss for families and units when Soldiers return home safely after a year or more in combat only to kill themselves during the first three months they’re back. These Soldiers were someone’s responsibility. They were all defenders of our nation and died because of negligence and complacency.

Bottom line

It’s time to hold commanders, NCOs and Soldiers responsible and accountable and use tough discipline where needed. Until then, it’s like sending troopers out the door without checking their chutes.■

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SAFE
MATURE
ACCOUNTABLE
RELIABLE
TRUSTWORTHY

BE a SMART SOLDIER

Be **SMART**. Protect yourself and those around you. The Army was built on discipline, leadership and regulations, and the regulation says someone has to ensure everyone in the vehicle wears a seat belt.

*Be that **SMART** someone.*
Learn more at <https://safety.army.mil>



A Stark Reminder

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 ROBERT JUSTISON
Delaware Army National Guard
New Castle, Delaware

In May 2004, I was a member of Company B, 1st Battalion, 150th Aviation Regiment, in the Delaware Army National Guard. Our unit was mobilized in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III, and our UH-60 aviation company was assigned to provide troop and VIP transport missions in Kuwait and Iraq. This was our first combat deployment.

While at the mobilization station, our UH-60A/L aircraft were being sent out for upgrades and a lot of modifications that required the replacement of old wiring. The upgrades were done by a couple of different contractors, and all eight of our aircraft were modified prior to our arrival in Kuwait. All company aircraft were

“The heat generated was enough to arc weld the wire retaining clip to the control tube.”

used for training and flown to the port and put onto a ship.

After arriving in Kuwait, I was assigned to fly a routine VIP mission to pick up the division commander and bring him to our base. The total flight time was to be about 30 minutes. I was the pilot in command, sitting in the right seat, flying with another experienced aviator.



The crew and I arrived about an hour and a half before liftoff to complete our preflight and configure the aircraft for the mission. The aircraft preflight was completed without finding any deficiencies. The crew and I then got into the aircraft and started going through each item on the checklist. The auxiliary power unit was started to provide AC electrical power to operate aircraft systems on the ground prior to starting the two main engines.

The checks included the flight controls, which is done prior to the first flight of the day. It tests both the hydraulic systems and the helicopter flight controls and is normally accomplished by the pilot in the right seat. One part of it is to move the cyclic control stick through its full range of motion. The operator's manual states there should be no binding or restrictions during this test. However, while moving the cyclic controls, I noticed a slight restriction, immediately followed by bright sparks and black smoke coming from the cabin

ceiling between the co-pilot and pilot's seats. We immediately shut down the aircraft APU, turned off the battery and exited the aircraft without further incident. We then used our company spare aircraft and completed the mission.

Fortunately, nobody was injured; however, there was damage to the aircraft. The cause of the sparks and smoke was due to a wiring bundle being cut from one of the aircraft control tubes. The heat generated was enough to arc weld the wire retaining clip to the control tube. Most, if not all, of the electrical relays in the aircraft were blown out. It was a long time before repairs were completed and the aircraft returned to service.

This incident could have had serious and/or catastrophic results if it had happened in flight. It was a stark reminder of how important it is to always use and follow all checklists. Remember, the checklists and their associated steps are there to protect both personnel and equipment. ■



Kill the Chill — Safely COMPILED BY THE KNOWLEDGE STAFF

There are few things more miserable than shivering in a tent on a cold winter night. To help kill the chill, many Soldiers in the field warm their tents with space heaters. The Army has rules and regulations in place regarding space heater usage to keep Soldiers from accidentally setting their tents ablaze. What Soldiers should know, however, is many of these guidelines also apply to using portable heating devices in their homes.

Portable heating devices, including space heaters, are the leading cause of deaths in home heating equipment-related fires, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Every year, an estimated 25,000 residential fires are associated with the use of space heaters, accounting for more than 300 fatalities. In addition, another 6,000 persons receive emergency room care for burn injuries associated with contacting the hot surfaces of room heaters, mostly in non-fire situations.

Not surprisingly, the peak months for home heating fires are December, January and February, accounting



for 43 percent. As we approach these potentially deadly months, keep in mind these suggestions from the CPSC for the selection, safe use and maintenance of electric, gas, wood and kerosene space heaters:

- Select a space heater with a guard around the flame or the heating element. This will help keep children, pets and clothing away from the heat source.
- When selecting a heater, look for one that has been tested and certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory. These heaters have been determined to meet specific safety standards, and manufacturers are required to provide important use and care information to the consumer.
- Buy a heater that is the correct size for the area you want to heat. The wrong size heater could produce more pollutants and may not be an efficient use of energy.
- Read and follow the manufacturer's operating instructions. Keep the owner's manual in a convenient place to refer to when needed.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- Keep doors open to the rest of the house if you are using an unvented fuel-burning space heater. This helps to prevent pollutant build-up and promotes proper combustion. Even vented heaters require ventilation for proper combustion.
- Never leave a space heater on when you go to sleep or leave the area. For fuel-fired heaters, dangerous levels of carbon monoxide could accumulate or uncontrolled burning could cause a fire.
- Never use or store flammable liquids (such as gasoline) around a space heater. The flammable vapors can flow from one part of the room to another and be ignited by the open flame or by an electrical spark.
- Be aware mobile homes require specifically designed heating equipment. Only electric or vented fuel-fired heaters should be used.
- Place heaters at least 3 feet away from objects such as bedding, furniture and drapes.
- Never use heaters to dry clothes

FYI

For more information about space heater safety, visit the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website at www.cpsc.gov or the National Fire Protection Association website at www.nfpa.org.



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“It’s also a good idea to check your smoke detectors monthly and install a carbon monoxide alarm in your home, especially if you use a fuel-burning space heater.”

or shoes. Do not place heaters where towels or other objects could fall onto them and start a fire.

It’s also a good idea to check your smoke detectors monthly and install a carbon monoxide alarm in your home, especially if you use a fuel-burning space heater. Known as the silent killer, carbon monoxide, or CO, is a poisonous, colorless, odorless gas. It is produced as a result of

the incomplete burning of natural gas and other carbon-containing materials such as kerosene, oil, propane, coal, gasoline and wood.

The symptoms of CO poisoning, which include shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness, lightheadedness and headaches, are often confused with the flu, food poisoning or other illnesses. The effects of CO vary, but people with heart or lung disease,

elevated CO blood levels (smokers), the elderly, young children and fetuses are the most susceptible. At high concentration levels, CO can kill an individual in minutes.

The National Fire Protection Association recommends securing only those CO alarms which have been listed by an independent testing laboratory. These alarms should be installed in central locations outside each separate sleeping area. If bedrooms are spaced apart, each area will need a CO alarm.

Heat is one thing no one wants to do without during cold weather. By following a few simple guidelines and using a little common sense when operating space heaters, you can ensure you’re warming your home safely. ■

**MAKE SOUND RISK DECISIONS.
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INCREASE COMBAT POWER.**

Have you heard about the features on GRAT?
GRAT provides you with the ability to electronically sign risk management worksheets as well as save draft worksheets. It will also automatically save them before the program times out, which is now relayed by a countdown timer and notice.

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<https://grat.safety.army.mil>

HERE IT COMES

Are you ready
to hit the
road?

- Have your vehicle serviced
- Plan your route
- Pack an emergency road kit
- Check the weather forecast
- Get plenty of rest
- Complete a TRiPS assessment

READY ...OR NOT?

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<https://safety.army.mil>



Hunting for Trouble GLEN JORDAN Camp Shelby, Mississippi

It was late November in southern Mississippi. The weather throughout the week had been cool with scattered showers — conditions just right for a great weekend of deer hunting. I was in my study, cleaning my deer rifle and getting my ammunition ready for the hunt. Once I finished, I gathered my hunting clothes and took it all out to my carport so it would be ready for the next day.

Once I had my gear loaded in the hunting box and secured my rifle in my gun scabbard, I started the inspection on my Arctic Cat 500 all-terrain vehicle. About two months earlier, I'd taken an ATV safety training course conducted by my unit and taught by one of my officers. He covered proper riding techniques

FYI

The ATV Safety Institute has informative videos and classes available to help riders hone their skills. Check them out online at <http://www.atvsafety.org/>.

in different types of terrain, safety inspections — to include T-CLOCS — and proper personal protective equipment requirements.

With that training still fresh in my mind, I completed my inspection checklist and made sure the gas tank was full. I then gathered my PPE (helmet, gloves



and goggles) and loaded the ATV onto the trailer. I completed my preparations about 10:30 p.m. and went to bed.

As expected, 4 a.m. came early. I stumbled out of bed, told my wife goodbye and headed for the door. Before I left, however, I climbed on the trailer and started up the ATV, just to make sure it would run. It was purring like a kitten, so I shut it off, got in the truck and headed to my friend's house. After loading his ATV and hunting gear onto the trailer, we started the 45-minute drive to our hunting location.

Once we arrived, we unloaded both ATVs from the trailer, loaded our equipment (guns, treestands and backpacks) and took off down the trail to our dismount spot. It was just before dawn, so we had on our headlights as we went one behind the other through the woods. I was in the lead and

my friend was about 20-30 feet behind me. It took us about 15 minutes to reach our dismount point, where we unloaded our gear and walked the rest of the way to our hunting spot.

We reconnoitered the area and picked spots about 200 yards apart. I climbed a tree and set up my stand while my friend settled in a blind on the ground. For the next few hours, squirrels, birds and armadillos scattered throughout the woods making all kinds of racket. That was fine, but where were the deer?

As the afternoon passed and we'd yet to see even a single doe, we decided to call it quits. We walked back to our ATVs, packed our gear, and unloaded our guns and secured them in the scabbards. As we departed, I was leading the way. It was dark now, so we again had our



lights on as we moved back down the trail.

As I approached a trail intersection, I stopped my ATV to get my bearings and make sure I was heading in the right direction. When I figured out the correct trail was straight ahead, I let off the brakes and began to move forward. Unaware that I had stopped, my friend came flying around the corner and slammed into the rear of my ATV.

The impact sent him flying over the handlebars and to the ground. I quickly shut off my four-wheeler and ran to see if he was OK. Fortunately, he was wearing his helmet, goggles and gloves and only suffered a small scratch on his arm. His ATV didn't fare as well, but it is still drivable. He lost one headlight and the plastic grill cover was broken. After we picked up the pieces, we rode back to the trailer, packed our hunting gear and headed home.

As we drove home, we ate our sandwiches and discussed what had happened. The following points summarize the lessons we learned.

1. We failed to conduct a risk assessment for the trip. We had been hunting together before, which led us to become complacent.
2. My friend was driving an unfamiliar ATV. He had borrowed his son-in-law's four-wheeler because his battery was dead.
3. We failed to consider that when riding through the woods at night or during limited visibility, you have to reduce your speed and increase the amount of space between vehicles.
4. Wearing proper PPE protects you. In this case, it worked just as it was designed.
5. Don't conduct an inspection on your ATV by yourself. Have a friend or family member inspect it with or after you. They may find something you overlooked.
6. Take a safety course before going out into the woods.

We're inundated with messages that warn us to drive and ride safely and responsibly. Remember, though, those rules also apply to any off-road activities as well. Be safe! ■



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Army Safe is Army Strong and that starts with a Soldier's Family. Have the information to help you and your Family stay SAFE.





Avoiding a New Standard

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Brooksville, Florida

In today's fast-paced operational tempo and multiple mission sets with multi-national forces, it is important to know how our allies operate in a similar circumstances. Likewise, it is important for our allies to know how we operate in regard to mission-essential details that may be required when working together. I state it this way because of a situation my unit encountered while deployed to Basrah, Iraq.

The British military is a highly trained, fully functional force. But without guidance and being properly informed by us, they are not going to know how we conduct our missions, especially a non-aviation-related unit. They train for their missions in conjunction with aviation assets using British aircraft — just as we train with our own.

We were a UH-60 lift asset assigned to a task force operating in conjunction with British SAS ground units. They were a great asset from an operations standpoint, but somewhere along the line there was a break in communication. It was clear we had not briefed them regarding what we expected of them to successfully execute a mission safely in terms of the way we train and operate — most importantly, the planning phase. The question you must ask yourself is this: Would this be a failure of the line unit or a higher command? In our situation, it was perceived to be neither. But mitigating factors were not in place to correct the situation.



Overall, our mission planning at a company level was more than adequate. The problems became apparent as missions changed. These changes did not occur within the allotted timeframe and proper intelligence was not available as quickly as it was required. With the understanding that we were in a dynamic period and with consideration of mission type, we continued doing the best we could to reduce risk. With pressure from above, we were pressed to proceed with little regard to the regulatory and statutory failures in the process. The people responsible were never held accountable and probably not even aware of the chaos they were creating at the lower levels.

Rules and procedures are set in place for a reason. When people are not held to a standard, they automatically fall below it at some point. Over time, if allowed, a new standard arises that doesn't reach the quality of the original.

With the assets at stake, including Soldiers and civilians of varying nationalities, we can't afford to allow these slippages to occur. It is our responsibility to make it known that we will not accept it.

At the unit level, as small as it is, this should be openly accepted and not frowned upon by higher command. A system has been put in place and we are to enforce those standards. The only exceptions are the possible prevention of a catastrophic accident, saving the lives of our Soldiers and the financial loss that would be incurred with it. Is it worth it to take that shortcut?

This message must be echoed throughout the Army. Standards must be enforced and details must be disseminated no matter how small or seemingly insignificant at the time. We are not in the business of just getting by. Getting by or just letting it go kills our Soldiers. ■

**Get the tools before
the road gets rough.**



Driver's Training Toolbox

<https://safety.army.mil/driverstrainingtoolbox>





Beware of the Blister

VERONIQUE HAUSCHILD
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Most of us have experienced the pain of a friction blister. These injuries form when an object, such as a sock, shoe or strap, is repeatedly moved across a part of the body with enough force to cause the layers of skin to release heat. The heat causes redness and a separation, or cleft, between the outermost layer of the skin and rest of the layers. The cleft then fills with fluid, causing a raised area on the skin.

Blisters typically form on the toes, feet and ankles, but they can also occur on the hands or other places where there is repeated rubbing, such as the torso from the straps of a heavy backpack. Because these injuries often only cause discomfort and don't require medical treatment, they are sometimes described as "just a blister." Some blisters, however, can become temporarily debilitating for Soldiers, forcing them to restrict certain activities and limit physical training. In some cases, friction blisters develop into infections that require antibiotics and medical treatment. As one of the most common injuries among Soldiers, friction blisters can have a notable adverse impact on military readiness.

Activities such as marching



and running are the most common causes of blisters in the military. A recent review of injuries associated with marching or hiking showed heavy load carriage increases the risk of foot blisters. While Soldiers may not be able to avoid some activities that put them at risk for developing blisters, there are precautions they can take to minimize the likelihood of developing one and/or reduce the severity of any that do develop.

Studies provide evidence that some people may have a higher risk of developing blisters. For example, having no foot arch or flat feet, or being of an ethnicity other than African American, can increase your risk of getting a blister. While these factors cannot be changed, others that increase the risk of blisters can be modified. The U.S. Army Public Health Center (Provisional)

offers the following tactics that might be helpful in reducing the risk of developing a blister:

Adaptation

To help your skin become more resistant:

- Slowly increase the duration and intensity of blister-causing activities.
- Use the same boots/shoes, gloves or load weight as you increase activity.

Socks

Keep skin dry:

- Synthetic socks — made from acrylic, nylon or polyester, rather than cotton — that ventilate and wick moisture away from the feet are recommended, especially during long-distance marching or running.
- Some people advocate wearing a double layer of synthetic socks since a second layer stops the first from rubbing



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FYI

The Mayo Clinic recommends keeping a blister intact to help reduce the risk of infection. However, if a blister becomes too painful and medical help is not available, the following measures can be taken to drain it:

- Wash your hands and the blister with soap and warm water.
- Swab the blister with iodine.
- Sterilize a clean, sharp needle by wiping it with rubbing alcohol.
- Use the needle to puncture the blister. Aim for several spots near the blister's edge. Let the fluid drain, but leave the overlying skin in place.
- Apply an ointment (Vaseline, Plastibase, other) to the blister and cover it with a nonstick gauze bandage. If a rash appears, stop using the ointment.
- Change the dressing every day. Apply more ointment and a bandage.

against the skin. Others, however, prefer a single-layer loop-stitched sock, as less heat is generated than with two layers. Scientific evidence does not clearly indicate which is best. This may vary with individual risk factors.

Other options to consider include:

Shoes

Minimize contact between the foot and shoe:

- Make sure toes do not touch the end of the shoe while walking. Consider a wide toe box with room for toes to wiggle.
- Purchase shoes later in

the day since feet may swell half a size larger throughout the day or after an activity.

- Do not leave shoes/boots on radiators or near heaters since this can cause them to shrink and the seams to protrude.

Taping and skin coverings

- Certain skin coverings have been shown to help absorb friction during movement, which can reduce blister occurrence or severity.
- Zinc oxide tape has been anecdotally reported in running communities to prevent blisters from forming or minimizing further injury to an existing blister. Other products referred to as "blister plasters" will expand in response to friction and protect the area from blisters forming or getting worse.

Insoles

- A closed-cell neoprene insole was found to reduce the incidence of blisters in U.S. Coast Guard recruits.
- Anecdotal reports suggest properly fitted insoles can reduce blisters, but ill-fitting insoles can increase them.

Coatings

- Some athletes advocate using products such as petroleum jelly to reduce friction and prevent chafing and blisters.
- While prior studies suggested antiperspirants may reduce blisters, there is a risk of skin irritation, so it is not

specifically recommended.

There is limited scientific evidence validating the effectiveness of most blister-preventing tactics among large populations. What works for some may not work for others, so it's up to the individual Soldier to determine their own best practices to avoid the pesky, painful blister. ■

If it happens ...

REPORT IT
ARMY ACCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM

<https://reportit.safety.army.mil>

HERE IT COMES

are you ready for the ride?



When riding on an Army installation:

- During hours of darkness or reduced visibility, bicycles must be equipped with an operable headlight or taillight.
- Riders must wear a reflective upper garment.
- Riders must wear a Consumer Product Safety Commission-approved helmet.
- Wearing headphones, earphones or other listening devices is prohibited.
- Yield to traffic when appropriate.
- Go with the traffic flow.
- Obey all traffic laws.
- Look before turning.



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<https://safety.army.mil>



Rolling Blunder

THOMAS ANDERSON



It was my last day on the rifle range. Actually, it was the last range I would fire on in my Marine Corps career. After earning another “expert” badge, I left with a feeling of accomplishment. I could now put a 16th award bar on my rifle badge, as every trip to the range had resulted in expert qualification.

It was about 3 p.m. on a chilly but sunny Friday afternoon when I arrived home and passed on the good news to my family. A quick check with my wife confirmed dinner was still about an hour and a half away. A knowing smile crossed my face as I realized I had time for a nice ride over some winding country roads in the area.

Several factors during range week had kept me from riding my motorcycle as much as I’d liked, so I was eager to take it out. I mentally ran through the sitrep (sunny but a bit chilly, total of 90 minutes available) and headed to the garage to warm up the scooter. I donned my leather jacket and noticed the reflective vest was still attached. I considered removing it, but, hey, it’s a black and

silver vest, so it doesn’t cost me too many cool points. Once my bike was warm, I put on my Department of Transportation-approved helmet and full-length gauntlet leather gloves. Remembering the chill, as well as the fact that I might be returning at twilight, I also put on my chaps to cut the wind. That’s when I noticed my feet.

I was wearing a nice pair of hiking boots. The boots were not my first choice for riding gear, but they seemed sturdy enough. I briefly considered going back inside to change into my riding

boots, but by that point I’d already lost at least 10 minutes of precious riding time. Surely these boots would be fine for a short ride near home. (I bet you’re seeing the writing on the wall, aren’t you?)

Once in the wind, my worries began shedding off me like leaves falling from trees. As I rolled through the curves, I was reminded why I ride. A quick glance at the trip meter snapped me back to reality, though. I was about 12 miles from having to go to my reserve tank. “No problem,” I thought, “Just a short detour to the edge of town for some gas and I’ll be back on the road.”

About five minutes later, I pulled into the gas station. Of course, every pump was occupied. I didn’t want this little pit stop to eat up any more of my time than necessary, so I decided to find another station rather than wait in line. As I approached the exit, I saw a car waiting to turn left. I put on my turn signal and pulled up next to the car to prepare to turn right. However, when I attempted to put my foot down so I could stop and check traffic, it wouldn’t move.

Confused, I tried to free my foot as I began to fall to the left. As my

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KNOWLEDGE

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shoulder hit the passenger door of the car next to me, the bike fell onto my left leg. Luckily, the driver heard me hit the car and stopped. After I killed the engine, a man who was at the gas station helped me lift up the bike — my foot still stuck in its trap.

All appeared fine with both vehicles and I seemed unhurt except for a strange feeling in my left glove. When I took it off to check, blood poured out of the glove and onto the ground. My fingertip was dangling enough to let me know a trip to the hospital was in my future. I put on my glove to hold everything in place and then rode home so my wife

could drive me to the naval hospital.

So how did this accident even happen? Unfortunately, my impatience was to blame — namely my unwillingness to give up five minutes of cruising time to put on riding boots. You see, the tread pattern on my hiking boots fit perfectly around my bike's peg, which is spring loaded to prevent dragging. The spring allowed the peg to lift far enough that my foot caught between the peg and shift lever. This prevented me from putting my foot down to keep the bike from falling. I'd failed to adhere to a very basic rule of motorcycling —

ATGATT (all the gear, all the time).

After being told I'd probably lose my fingertip — or at least never have a fingernail again — I am happy to report the tip and nail are still in place. (Thank you, Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune!) You can bet that I'll never take my bike out again without first putting on all of my personal protective equipment. I can tell you from firsthand experience that wearing proper PPE from head to ankle is not quite enough to avoid becoming a member of Rolling Blunder motorcycle club. ■

RIDE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Motorcycle Mentorship Program establishes voluntary installation-level motorcycle associations where less experienced riders and seasoned riders can create a supportive environment of responsible motorcycle riding and enjoyment. This can create positive conduct and behavior and serve as a force multiplier that supports a commander's motorcycle accident prevention program.

MMP
MOTORCYCLE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Check out the U.S Army Combat Readiness Center MMP website for some examples of active mentoring programs.

<https://safety.army.mil/mmp/>



Don't Add Another Risk

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The majority of military aviators know of the pressures of flying in a combat environment due to the deployments they've endured to help rid the world of terrorism. Therefore, we put forth a lot of effort into learning how to become better and safer pilots to accomplish a mission in an environment that is all too unforgiving. Although we constantly practice and rehearse various types of combat scenarios, we sometimes fail to recognize the pressures pilots endure to do a good job and successfully complete each mission. In turn, we allow ourselves to get too worked up and make faulty decisions. Here's an example:

It was a regular summer day in Iraq, with the temperature in the low 100s and plenty of



base. This would take place only after we completed a mission to uncover weapons caches scattered throughout the area. The mission had been briefed well, and everyone involved had a thorough understanding of what was required.

Due to the number of

Chalk 4 apparently suffered a hard landing. The incident caused the tail wheel fork assembly to become detached from the rest of the tail landing gear assembly. If one of the Soldiers that had just been dropped off hadn't gotten the crew chief's attention, the crew may never have realized the damage to the aircraft.

Apparently, the pilot had done all he could to maintain separation between his aircraft and the one in front of him. Still, his approach was too fast and caused the final touchdown to be a little too hard. His anticipation to land possibly caused him to reduce the power too quickly.

Even though I did not participate in this mission, I know both of the pilots flying that day pretty well. Both are terrific people to work with. One of the pilots has flown more than 2,000

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dust lingering in the air. We were tasked with a fairly simple operation to move a large number of Iraqi and American forces from an unsecured location back to the forward operating

personnel that needed to be picked up and dropped off, the flight of four UH-60Ls was to make multiple trips to complete the mission. Everything seemed to be going as expected until



hours, while the other, who apparently was on the controls at the time of the accident, hadn't been flying for too long. Regardless, he had a great attitude and always showed a tremendous amount of dedication to becoming a better pilot.

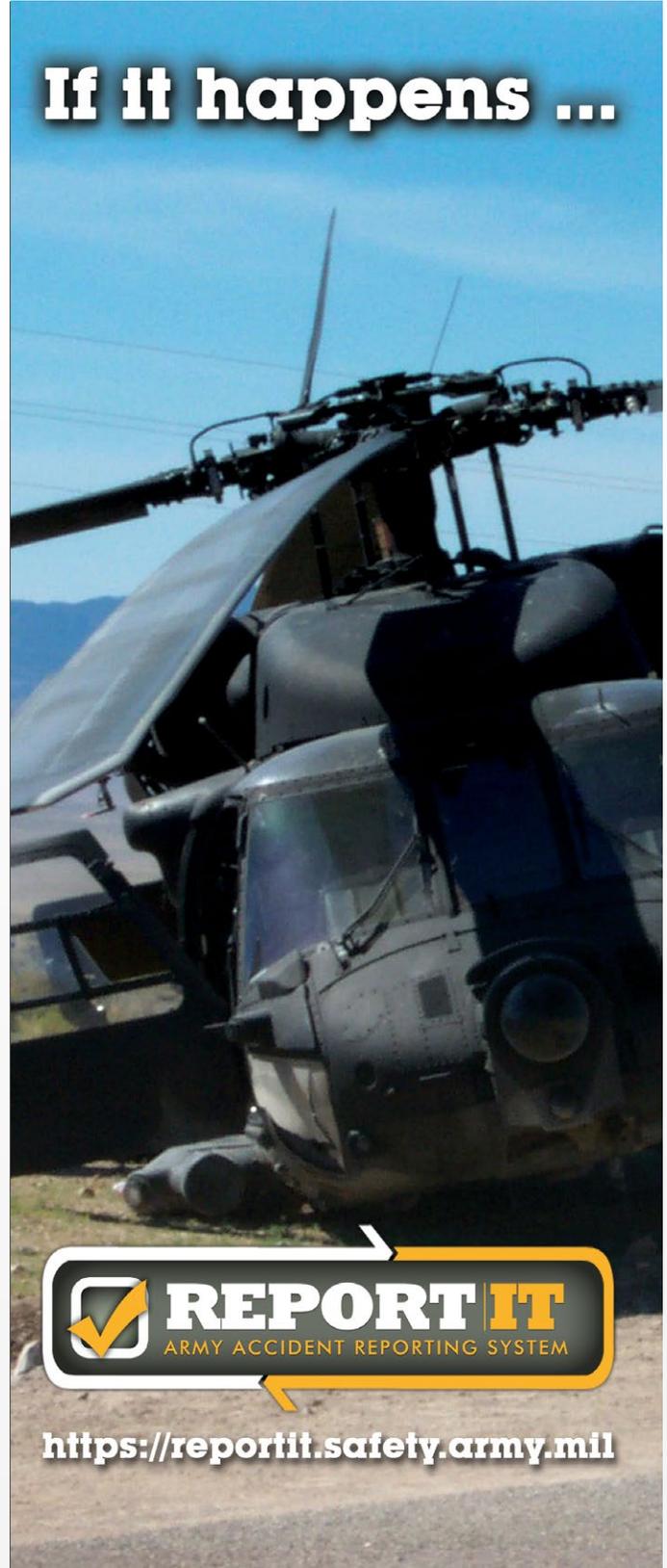
I feel the amount of pressure an individual puts on oneself sometimes

“Allowing yourself to put too much pressure on what you are trying to accomplish can cause you to make an unclear decision or too quick of a control movement.”

causes accidents like this despite the desire to do everything right. Allowing yourself to put too much pressure on what you are trying to accomplish can cause you to make an unclear decision or too quick of a control movement.

These pilots walked away from what could have been a more serious event as better and safer aviators who saw firsthand the unforgiving and unexpected dangers of combat flying. We should always understand the hazards we face on each flight and the pressure we can put on ourselves to accomplish a mission. Don't add another risk to your flight. You already have enough to start with. ■

If it happens ...





Real Men Read Manuals

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I have heard it said several times, “Real men don’t read directions.” Apparently, some people think the idea of actually paying attention to all the papers (directions, manuals, safety notices) included with a new purchase is unnecessary to fully understand how that item works. As a safety professional, I could not disagree more. I almost always go to the opposite extreme. Notice I said, “Almost.”

Whenever I buy a new item, one of the first things I do is read the owner’s manual. Over the years, I believe this practice has served me well. Recently, though, I bought a used drill press at auction, and it didn’t come with an instruction manual. Eager to try it out, I immediately went home, unloaded the drill press and plugged it in. I figured if it worked, I got a good deal.

Unfortunately, all the drill press did was make a humming noise — as if it wanted to start but needed some help. Noticing the drive belt on top of the machine, I thought, “I bet all I need to do is give the belt a



“After I stopped the bleeding, I visited a medical clinic, swallowed a couple of pain pills and endured a great deal of embarrassment.”

tug to free it up.” It freed up all right. In fact, it spun so fast that it pulled my finger into the pulley! After I stopped the bleeding, I visited a medical clinic, swallowed a couple of pain pills and endured a great deal of embarrassment.

I learned two things that

day I want to pass along. First, if you ever purchase a used item like I did, search online for the operator’s manual. It will contain useful safety information (like making you aware of missing parts such as a drive belt and pulley guard!). Second, always inspect your used purchases to identify any signs of modification or breakage by the previous owner. As a friend said to me after seeing my bandaged finger, “You know they were probably selling it for a reason.” You can bet I won’t make the same mistake again. ■

Did You Know?

Many manufacturers place their products’ operator’s manuals, installation instructions and safety notices on their websites for easy downloading and printing.



The Other Driver

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Road trips can be dangerous, so I always take the steps I think are necessary to be prepared. I plan ahead, check my route on the map and make sure my vehicle is serviced and ready to go. However, I could never have anticipated what happened to my family on a Sunday in Florida. Our new vehicle was totaled and I wound up in the hospital — not because of a crash on the highway, but from an accident in a parking lot! Here's what happened.

I was stationed at Fort Rucker, Alabama, and my wife and I had planned to spend the weekend in Destin, Florida, with our two daughters. We'd made hotel arrangements for Saturday night and planned to return late Sunday evening. The weather on the way down wasn't as forecast (imagine that). Instead, the skies were overcast and the clouds threatened rain.

By the time we got to Destin it was raining, so we spent the afternoon exploring the town. We were hoping the weather would be better on Sunday, but no such luck. It started raining in the morning and didn't look like it was going to clear up anytime soon. We eventually gave up on the weather and decided to head home. We'd been on the road for an hour or so when we stopped for coffee at what we thought was a gas station. It was actually some sort of gift shop, but since we were already stopped, I thought I'd take the opportunity to check something out in the owner's manual before we took off again.

We were about 20 feet off the road and facing the direction of travel. My wife was in the back seat between the two child car seats, trying to keep the girls occupied. I was looking down and reading the owner's manual, so I never saw the Pontiac Firebird coming at us.



The 19-year-old behind the wheel was driving his father's car way too fast for the road conditions. The vehicle hydroplaned and slid off the road and into the parking lot straight for our vehicle. He struck my left-rear bumper so hard it spun my car around twice.

FYI

Parents, it's up to you to ensure your children are properly restrained in a car seat that is appropriate for their age, height and weight. Visit the Safe Kids Worldwide website for tips and instructions for properly installing a car seat at http://www.safekids.org/safetytips/field_risks/car-seat?gclid=COC9ZeFpMcCFVg8gQodwclLaQ.

I regained consciousness about four hours later. I'd suffered a minor concussion and had two staples in my head from where I was thrown into the door frame during the crash. My wife was beaten up by the girls' car seats and had the worst black eye I'd ever seen. She also had a large bruise on her back.

Fortunately, the girls weren't injured, though one ended up on her back in the rear of our vehicle, still strapped into her car seat. I'm not sure how that happened because I'd secured it with the shoulder belt according to the seat's instructions before we'd started driving.

We later called a friend to come and get us. After we left the hospital, we stopped by the junkyard where our car had been towed to get our stuff. Our new car was destroyed. The rear was crushed, the floor was cracked all the way to the front and the frame was bent.

Although our injuries left us a bit uncomfortable for a while, we eventually recovered. It took us a month of fighting with the insurance company, but we ultimately got our claim paid off and were able to replace our vehicle. Given the circumstances, this whole incident could have been a lot worse.

I still plan my road trips just as I always have in the past. However, I now have child safety seats secured with three-point restraints instead of only a shoulder belt. And no matter how safe I think I'm being, I'm always on the lookout for the other driver. ■



Make It Personal

CAPT. C. TRAVIS WARD
Oklahoma Army National Guard

We all have accepted the fact that if you are in aviation long enough you are going to bury a friend or two. We also know and accept that our friends might have to do the same for us. With that in mind, why don't we do everything possible to prevent mishaps from happening?

Most of us have seen what happens in a unit when a mishap occurs. It gets personal. We have the memorials and say things like, "At least they died doing what they love." We tell ourselves, "That's the price of doing business." Then we give the family a hug and get back into the cockpit.

With many accidents there are findings of pilot or leadership failure, but you'll be hard pressed to find one that says the unit failed. However, "somebody always knows" pops up frequently in safety training or in articles written about accident prevention. And that is the point. How many times has it been said, "That is an accident waiting to happen," which is great in the identifying hazards category? The problem is that's usually where it stops and, more times than not, that accident finally happens.

The fact we accept aviation as a dangerous business needs to stop. Everybody takes the tactical risk seriously and the Army invests billions of dollars in equipment and training to reduce the lives lost in combat. Why? We make it personal.

Every member in the unit makes it their responsibility to negate the tactical risk. There is no way to know how many mishaps have



been prevented over the years because of those efforts, but it is not enough. We keep having the same accidents over and over. Why? We don't make it personal until after the fact. If you took the heartfelt, solemn condolences given to a family of "let me know if there is anything I can do" and applied it before we lose a Soldier, we could greatly reduce our accident rate.

Granted, we can't prevent every accident from happening, but we can prevent some. As for the ones we can't prevent, we can at least lessen the severity. By making it personal, every unit member can help reduce the times the flag is flown at half-staff because of a preventable mishap. Safety is part of our values, ethos and creed and should be taken to heart. We have to do everything possible to keep our Soldiers from needlessly suffering because of preventable accidents. Each one of us has to take the threat of an accident as serious as we do the improvised explosive device or manned portable air defense system threats.

During my 12 years of service, the toughest duty I have had was being a casualty assistance officer. It is never easy to lose a comrade, but when it is a senseless loss, handling it is so much harder when you have to watch a family deal with that loss, trying to believe that their loved one died for a cause. Once that family realizes it all could have been prevented, dealing with the death becomes that much harder.

There was no one defining cause, just a chain of bad decisions and the assumption of risk that outweighed the benefit. That, and if the unit would have made the personal commitment to mitigate the accidental risk like they did mitigating the tactical risk, would have made a difference. At least then the families of victims could have been told we truly did everything we could to prevent the tragedy. ■

ARE YOU READY?

Wouldn't you like to know if your unit is about to experience a mishap?

Wouldn't you like to prevent the loss of personnel and equipment?

Don't you want to protect your combat power?

ARAP

ARMY READINESS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

ARAP is a Web-based initiative that provides battalion-level commanders with data on their formation's readiness posture.

Sign up for your assessment today!

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