



**Safety & Risk:  
Balance Through Awareness**

**Off-Duty Safety Awareness Presentation  
Speaker Notes**

2 May 16

U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center's  
Off-Duty Safety Awareness Presentation Speaker Notes

Included in this packet are the speaker notes for the off-duty safety awareness presentation. Unless otherwise stated, the statistics included in this briefing are as of 4 April 2016. The goal of the presentation is to make all Soldiers aware of the off-duty hazards they may face in the upcoming months so they can become part of the solution in preventing the next accident. Although these notes can be used as is, please feel free to modify them to fit your presentation style or to reflect what's happening in your organization.

**Slide 1: Opening**

Good morning/afternoon. Today we're going to talk about accident prevention. This presentation focuses on off-duty activities and examines how awareness can help you balance safety with risk and slow or eliminate the continued loss of Soldiers to preventable, off-duty accidents.

During today's presentation, we will discuss:

- Where we stand as an Army in terms of accidents.
- The types of accidents that are most prevalent.
- Potential hazards and control measures.
- And most importantly, how balancing safety and risk can help you prevent an accident that could leave you seriously injured or dead.

Please note that unless otherwise specified, all statistics in this presentation refer to FY11 – FY15.

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**Slide 2: Safety & Risk...Are You Maintaining the Proper Balance**

From FY11 through FY15, the Army lost an average of 110 Soldiers each year in off-duty accidents. That's over four times the number of Soldiers lost to on-duty accidents, and it's the equivalent of losing a company per year from our Army. If we continue to take unacceptable risks in our off-duty activities, we can expect to lose another company of Soldiers this fiscal year. But you can help change this outcome.

Be proactive and become aware of the hazards associated with the activities you do while off duty. Not just the out-of-the-ordinary things you do once a year on vacation, but the routine things you do on a daily basis. Then find a way to eliminate or at least balance the risks so you can help keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

Every Soldier is a valuable member of our Army team. By balancing safety and risk through awareness of potential hazards, you strengthen our team.

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**Slide 3: Off-Duty Fatalities Video**

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That's what happens when we aren't aware of safety hazards and fail to use what we know about managing risk.

Now, let's talk about how you can balance safety and risk—still have fun--AND prevent the next accident.

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**Slide 4: Balance**

There are a lot of definitions for the term “balance”. When it comes to balancing safety and risk in your off-duty pursuits, it really comes down to “keeping them in the correct proportions”. You have to assess each activity and determine that the risks to your personal wellbeing don't outweigh the benefits or enjoyment you expect to get by doing it. In other words, you have to decide up front whether you can live with the consequences if things go bad.

Training, standards and discipline are the cornerstones of success for everything we do as an Army and are essential to our individual and collective safety when we're on duty. They should also be the foundation for decisions regarding all your off-duty activities, as well.

We don't have the power to eliminate risk from our lives, but if you get the proper training, adhere to the prescribed standards of safety and perform all your activities in a disciplined and responsible manner, you can prevent avoidable accidents.

Balancing safety and risk is actually a very simple process if you remain engaged and aware. Throughout this presentation you will learn how to reduce the hazards related to various off-duty activities.

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**Slide 5: Alcohol**

As you will see throughout this presentation, alcohol is a common denominator in off-duty accidents. Since FY11, there have been nearly 300 off-duty accidents in the Army where alcohol use was confirmed or suspected.

Alcohol consumption slows your reaction time and, as you are all well aware, impairs both your judgment and your vision. All these factors can lead to an accident.

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Most alcohol-related accidents involve private motor vehicles – both the two-wheel and four-wheel variety – but each year Soldiers also die while handling weapons, boating, swimming, fishing, and participating in other activities while consuming alcohol.

We are going to take a look at each of the activities that often result in off-duty fatalities. Let's begin with water-related activities.

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**Slide 6: Water-Related Video**

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**Slide 7: Water-Related Activities**

From FY11 - FY15, we lost an average of eight Soldiers per year to off-duty, water-related activities. Remember, rank doesn't make you immune. Over a third of the water-related fatalities in the last five years involved a Leader.

How can you prevent a water-related accident? Think back to those three cornerstones we mentioned earlier; they are the safety measures that will allow you to balance water-related risks. Training - if you learn to swim, you are less likely to drown. Standards - Army regulations require that you follow state and local policies to wear a life jacket, which also offers drowning protection, especially if you go into the water unexpectedly. Discipline - you know that drinking alcohol impairs your ability to reason and to protect yourself from harm, so you should exercise discipline and limit or avoid alcohol consumption while relaxing in or on the water.

When participating in any type of water-related activity, it is important to identify the hazards and to know your limits. As an example, when swimming in rivers, lakes, and oceans, be aware of swift currents and undertows. In just minutes, even strong swimmers can tire rapidly in cold water and become unable to help themselves.

Balancing safety with risk would also require that you know how deep the water is before you dive in. In addition to the 40 Soldiers who died in water-related accidents in the last five years, another five Soldiers suffered permanently disabling injuries after diving into shallow waters.

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### **Slide 8: Boating Safety**

The U.S. Coast Guard ranks operator inattention, improper lookout, operator inexperience, excessive speed, and machinery failure as the top five contributing factors in recreational boating accidents. However, when it comes to fatal boating accidents, alcohol use is the leading contributing factor. You need to be aware that boating under the influence (BUI) on waterways is just as illegal and dangerous as DUI on a roadway.

Training and personal protective equipment (PPE) play critical roles on waterways. According to 2014 Coast Guard statistics regarding fatal recreational boating accidents where instruction and cause of death was known, 77% of the boat operators had not received boating safety instruction and 84% of those who drowned failed to wear a life jacket.

So what are some strategies to balance safety and risk on the water? Training - take a Coast Guard-approved boating safety course. Standards - review local laws and policies. Discipline - ensure that you, your buddies, and your Family members use life jackets and make sure the person operating the boat doesn't consume alcohol.

In addition, be sure to have a float plan. A float plan is an itinerary of when and where you plan to go while on the water. It is to be completed before you go boating and given to a person who can notify the Coast Guard or other rescue organization if you fail to check in according to the plan.

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### **Slide 9: Rip Currents**

Rip currents can be killers. The U.S. Lifesaving Association estimates that more than 100 people die annually on our nation's beaches due to rip currents and account for over 80% of rescues performed by beach lifeguards. To avoid and survive a rip current:

- Never swim alone and, whenever possible, swim at a lifeguard-protected beach.
- Obey all instructions and orders from lifeguards.
- Make sure you understand the significance of warning flags and understand that the absence of red flags does not assure safe conditions.
- When swimming at an unguarded beach, be cautious at all times. If in doubt, don't go out!
- When caught in a rip current, remain calm to think clearly and to conserve your energy.
- Don't fight a rip current. If you are unable to swim out of it, float or calmly tread water. Then swim parallel to the shoreline.
- When certain you are out of the current, swim toward shore.
- If you are still unable to reach shore, draw attention to yourself: face the shore, wave your arms, and yell for help.

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If you see someone in trouble, get help from a lifeguard. If a lifeguard is not available, have someone call 911. Throw the rip current victim something that floats and yell for them to swim parallel to the shore until they are out of the rip current. Remember, many people drown while trying to save someone else from a rip current.

On to our next topic: pedestrian accidents.

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**Slide 10: Pedestrian Video**

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**Slide 11: Pedestrian**

Have you ever traveled on foot to get to a destination? Of course you have. We've all been a pedestrian at one time or another. Whether you're taking a stroll down a city street or walking through a parking lot on your way to a restaurant or a shop, you're a pedestrian, and as a pedestrian you're vulnerable. We humans don't come equipped with bumpers and airbags. Face it, when it comes to a vehicle-pedestrian encounter, the pedestrian is going to be on the losing side 99% of the time.

Ever personally been involved in a "near miss" on a busy street when a vehicle got a little too close for comfort? Where a couple more seconds or just a few more inches would have turned you into an accident statistic? Once you were certain you hadn't been hit, your first reaction was probably to give the vehicle operator a few choice words about his or her driving skills, right? But did you ever look at that incident from the driver's perspective?

Think about your own driving experiences. Have you ever been distracted behind the wheel and suddenly looked up to see a pedestrian in YOUR path? When you are on foot these days, that's what you are up against—distracted drivers. Texting, talking on the phone, digging in the bottom of the bag for that last French fry. That's why when you are walking near an area with moving vehicles, you have to take matters into your own hands and do everything you can to make yourself less vulnerable.

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### **Slide 12: Pedestrian Accidents**

OK. Time to talk specifics. This paints the picture of the Army's pedestrian accidents over the past five years. 30 Soldiers have lost their lives due to pedestrian collisions. Almost all were male and nearly two-thirds of them were under 30 years old.

While officers do count among the dead, the vast majority of the Soldiers struck and killed were enlisted. 70% - that's 21 of the 30 Soldiers - were E3s, E4s and E5s. Does that sound like anybody you know? Does it sound like you? If so, you might want to be extra cautious crossing the street after this presentation. Your demographic isn't faring very well when traveling on foot. And if you go for a walk after a night out drinking that doesn't improve your odds of survival. Overall, alcohol impairment was confirmed in 24% of the incidences and suspected in several others.

Don't think you're safe if you avoid being outside during the summer either. Logically, that's when you'd think most of the accidents happened - what with more vehicles on the roads and people out walking enjoying the sunshine. However, in reality, it didn't matter what time of year it was. The deaths of these 30 Soldiers were spread evenly throughout the year.

So what were they doing? How did these 30 Soldiers end up in the morgue? After all, if you want to avoid ending up there yourself, you need to know what to watch out for. Balancing everyday risks in order to ensure your safety really comes down to being aware of your surroundings.

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### **Slide 13: What They Were Doing**

Eight of them were killed in the vicinity of a fender bender or a disabled vehicle—their own or someone else's. Please understand, no one is suggesting that you have to stop being a Good Samaritan to keep yourself safe, but what you should do is be situationally aware; AT ALL TIMES.

You know from your own experiences that drivers approaching a disabled vehicle primarily see only the vehicle. It's the biggest object in their field of view and it's the one thing that can cause them the most harm if they hit it. By comparison, you—the human—are practically invisible. It's no exaggeration to say they likely don't even see you. As a result, it's up to you to stay as far from their lane of travel as possible. Even then, you aren't guaranteed safety. Too often on our nation's highways, one or more pedestrians are killed by a distracted motorist who panics when approaching a disabled vehicle, loses control, hits the vehicle and knocks it into the people standing near it. Not only do you need to stay out of the roadway, you need to put as much distance as possible between you and the disabled vehicle until traffic has been diverted around it.

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Two Soldiers were killed as they fought in the street after a night out drinking, but sadly, over 56% of the Soldiers killed in vehicle-pedestrian collisions just let themselves get too close to the roadway. A few were struck from behind while exercising, but most were just careless. In almost every instance, it wasn't the driver who was at fault; it was a case of the pedestrian not paying attention and putting themselves too close to the path of a 3,000-pound vehicle.

Four Soldiers were hit by trains—one of them while lying on the tracks. Really? Let's move on. Being hit by a train deserves its own slide.

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**Slide 14: 4 Soldiers Killed by Trains**

OK, in all fairness, sometimes you can't avoid having to walk along a busy roadway, but there is NEVER a valid excuse for being hit by a train. This discussion isn't purely about balancing risks and safety. Pedestrians who choose to walk on railroad tracks are trespassing on private property. You can be fined several hundred to several thousand dollars, depending upon location. You can also be injured or killed. Case in point - four Soldiers are dead: one for running on the tracks while wearing earbuds, one who was likely knocked off the trestle by an oncoming train, one who was killed while lying motionless on the tracks and the most recent Soldier killed was standing on the tracks for a photo op.

It can take a mile or more to stop a train, so even if a locomotive engineer sees you on the tracks there won't be time to stop before hitting you. Railroad trestles are not meant to be sidewalks or pedestrian bridges! There is only enough clearance on the tracks for a train to pass. There is nowhere for you to go if you suddenly realize there is a train bearing down on you.

And it is not enough to stay off the railbed. Trains overhang the tracks by at least three feet on both sides. Loose straps hanging from rail cars may extend even farther. If you are in the right-of-way next to the tracks, you can be hit by the train or a strap, or you can even be sucked underneath the train by the rushing air that surrounds it.

One final point, when you cross a track at a marked pedestrian crossing, do not step onto the tracks immediately after a train passes. Trains can come from either direction. Your view of a second train might be blocked by the first. Wait until you can see clearly around the first train in BOTH directions before you cross. Ensure your safety by being aware.

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**Slide 15: Don't Be a Dead Ped**

As a pedestrian, you can greatly increase your odds of reaching your destination by following these tips. First and foremost, see and be seen. Most pedestrian accidents occur at night, so it pays to be especially vigilant after dark. Always wear a substantial amount of reflective clothing and carry a flashlight, but don't let that make you overconfident. Just because a driver sees a tiny flash of light up ahead doesn't guarantee they'll recognize it as a person.

During the day, make eye contact with the driver and hold your hand up before stepping out in front of a vehicle. Many drivers are distracted. Don't assume a driver is going to stop just because the light is red and the car is slowing down. Drivers who text are known to slow down and speed up erratically. Make SURE they see you.

Both at night and during the day, be predictable. Be where you are supposed to be and where drivers expect you to be. Use the crosswalk and don't suddenly step out from behind a parked vehicle or some other visual obstruction halfway down the street. Use all your senses when on foot. Look both ways and be hyperaware of your surroundings whether you are near a roadway or crossing a parking lot.

And finally, avoid walking while impaired by alcohol. The same factors that make drinking and driving a dangerous undertaking are equally true of drinking and walking. Better for you and your buddies to skip one drink and pool the money for cab fare.

Now let's discuss privately owned weapons.

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**Slide 16: Privately Owned Weapons (POWs) Video**

Play

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**Slide 17: Unintended Discharges**

Unintended discharges are a major concern on duty, but they also happen off duty. In fact, 21 Soldiers have lost their lives to off-duty accidents involving privately owned weapons (POWs) since FY11.

All too often, an individual will deliberately point a weapon at themselves or someone else believing it to be unloaded or loaded with dummy rounds. This behavior demonstrates a total lack of discipline. It is imperative that you always follow the basic standards of safe weapons handling, one of which is NEVER point a weapon at anything you don't intend to shoot.

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Alcohol was a known or suspected factor in over half the unintended discharge accidents. All but two occurred at night between the hours of 1900-0330, which is consistent with the finding that POW accidents commonly occur in social settings. If you see someone handling a weapon in any unsafe manner – especially while under the influence of alcohol – take action. You could save the life of a Family member, a friend, or even your own.

And remember, not all weapons operate in the same manner. Proficiency with your assigned military weapon does not make you an expert on all weapons. If you are handling a new weapon, read the owner's manual carefully and take a class to get the proper training.

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**Slide 18: THINK About It...**

Remember, firearms are designed to be deadly weapons and alcohol can have an adverse impact on your physical and mental balance. The best way to prevent these accidents is to never mix alcohol and weapons and to always THINK weapons safety!

**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.

Now we'll take a look at a few sports-related activities.

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**Slide 19: Sports-Related Video**

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**Slide 20: Sports-Related Activities**

From FY11 - FY15, 11 Soldiers died while participating in off-duty sports activities such as hiking, rock climbing, and parachuting. Many more were injured.

Regardless of what sport you decide to participate in, make sure you are physically prepared and have the proper training, required certification, clothing, and equipment to conduct the activity. You can mitigate your chances of serious injury or death by actively being aware of the risks during planning and throughout the activity. Make sure you follow all safety procedures and it's also a good idea to take a battle buddy along.

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Earlier, we mentioned filing a float plan when you are out boating. Having something similar when participating in other activities is a good way to help balance the risks and ensure your safety. Let someone know exactly where you're going and the date and time you plan to return. If you're not back on time, they will know where to start looking.

Now we'll discuss hazards around your home or living quarters.

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**Slide 21: Home Safety Video**

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**Slide 22: Home Safety**

Most people picture their home as a safe haven when, in fact, accidents in the home are extremely common and account for a large percentage of all injuries.

On duty, whether you're in the motor pool, the field, at a range, or are participating in some other mission, you typically apply the risk management process. You identify hazards and put controls in place to eliminate the hazards or mitigate the risks. This acts as a combat multiplier and assists you in successfully accomplishing your mission.

When you leave work, don't stop. Continue to use those same risk management strategies to identify and mitigate hazards in your home and during off-duty activities.

Let's look at some of the hazards lurking in that "safe haven" we fondly call our home.

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**Slide 23: Hazards In/Around the Home**

There are multiple hazards in and around the home, from the kitchen to the bathroom and out in the backyard.

According to the National Safety Council, the top five leading causes of accidental death in homes are poisoning, falls, drowning, fires/burns, and choking.

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**Slide 24: Top 5 “Hidden” Home Hazards**

Now let's talk about some less obvious hazards in the home. These five “hidden” hazards cited by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission pose a very real danger and are associated with products you may be using every day.

As an example, small powerful magnets, if swallowed, can attract inside the body and block, twist or tear the intestines. If you think your child has swallowed a magnet, seek medical attention immediately.

You should make it point to track the latest safety recalls for products you own and remove the dangerous ones from your home before they cause harm. As an easy way to make yourself aware of these risks, sign up for recall notices on the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website ([www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).)

Kids climb. Top-heavy furniture, TVs, and stoves can tip over and crush young children. Make all these objects more stable by installing anchors and brackets.

Never place a crib or playpen near a window blind. To prevent strangulation, use cordless blinds or install safety devices on blind cords. Install window guards to help prevent falls from open or partially opened windows.

Suction from a pool or spa drain can be powerful enough to trap a child or adult underwater. Inspect pools and spas for missing or broken drain covers.

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**Slide 25: Grilling Safety**

A fire in a grill cooking hot dogs and burgers is a welcome sight at a cookout, but fire anywhere else can make your barbecue memorable for the wrong reasons.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, each year an average of 8,800 home fires are caused by grilling, and close to half of all injuries involving grills are due to thermal burns. While nearly half of the people who grill do it year-round, July is the peak month for grill fires followed by May, June and August.

Here are some safety tips to keep in mind when using your grill:

- Use grills outdoors only. Grilling inside any type of enclosed space, such as a garage or even a tent, poses both a fire hazard and escalates the risk of exposing occupants to toxic gases and potential asphyxiation.
- Periodically clean the trays below the grill so the heat source used during cooking won't ignite the grease and food residue.
- NEVER add charcoal starter fluid when coals or kindling have already been ignited.

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- If using a gas cylinder, check the hose for leaks periodically, especially before using it for the first time each year. A light soap and water solution applied to the hose will quickly reveal escaping propane by forming bubbles.

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**Slide 26: Fire Safety**

Every year, Soldiers and Family members are seriously injured or killed in home fires. From FY11 – FY15, five Soldiers along with three Family members lost their lives.

Cooking equipment, most often a range or stovetop, is the leading cause of home fires in the United States. According to the National Fire Protection Association, cooking equipment fires account for 43% of all reported home fires, along with 38% of home fire injuries and 16% of home fire deaths.

Remember the old adage: “the cook who leaves the kitchen burns”? Unattended food cooking on a stove is by far the leading cause of these fires. Don't allow yourself to be distracted by something happening in another room in your house or barracks. Otherwise, you'll risk starting a fire that could injure or kill you, your Family or your fellow Soldiers.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, more than half (55%) of reported non-fatal home cooking fire injuries occurred when the victims tried to fight the fire themselves. If you have any doubt about your ability to extinguish the fire, do not attempt to fight it yourself. Evacuate the home, call 911 and allow professionals to handle it.

One of the most important things you can do to protect yourself and your Family is to make an escape plan with two ways out of every room. Practice it regularly, making sure everyone knows how to get out and where the rally point is. A fire can occur at any time of the day or night, so be prepared for both. If you set a standard for your Family and provide the required training, you can ensure they know how to safely escape a home fire.

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**Slide 27: Smoke Alarms**

In addition to having an escape plan, a great way to buy yourself some extra time in a fire emergency is to install smoke alarms. Smoke spreads faster than fire. Working smoke alarms are critical for early detection of a fire in your home and significantly increase your chances of surviving. In fact, having a working smoke alarm when fire breaks out in your home cuts your chances of dying in half!

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Did you know that roughly half of home fire deaths result from fires reported between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m., when most people are asleep? That's why it is important to install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement. The U.S. Fire Administration recommends installing smoke alarms both inside and outside of sleeping areas. Always follow the manufacturer's installation instructions.

To provide protection, smoke alarms must be maintained! A smoke alarm with a dead or missing battery is the same as having no smoke alarm at all. Test them once a month and replace the batteries twice a year. Your life depends upon it!

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### **Slide 28: Fire Prevention**

Here are a few safety tips that will help prevent home fires:

- Never smoke in bed - a lit cigarette dropped on a bed can cause a large fire in seconds.
- Keep your stove and vent hood clean - grease build-up is flammable.
- Place space heaters on level, hard, nonflammable surfaces, such as ceramic tile floors, and keep them at least three feet away from bedding, drapes, furniture, and other flammable materials.
- Inspect wires. If you find any worn or exposed wiring connected to appliances, discontinue their use immediately - a fire is imminent!
- Do not place cords and wires under rugs, over nails or in high-traffic areas.
- Keep lit candles away from combustible materials and always blow them out when you leave the room.
- Place a multi-purpose fire extinguisher in your kitchen (one rated for grease fires and electrical fires) and know how to use it.

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### **Slide 29: Carbon Monoxide**

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas; you can't see or smell it. It is extremely poisonous and high levels of it can kill within minutes. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each year in the U.S., nearly 500 people die and as many as 20,000 others visit emergency rooms for exposure to carbon monoxide.

Appliances that are designed to burn fuel usually produce very small amounts of CO and are not considered hazardous. However, if an appliance is not working properly, or is used incorrectly, dangerous levels of CO can result. So how do you know if CO is present? Well, it's not easy. CO poisoning can be confused with flu symptoms and food poisoning. Symptoms include shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness, light-headedness and/or headaches.

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You can prevent carbon monoxide poisoning by following some basic guidelines:

- Perform the manufacturer's prescribed maintenance on your heating system and fuel-burning appliances.
- Install a battery-operated CO detector in your home and check or replace the battery when you change the time on your clocks each spring and fall. If the detector sounds, leave your home immediately and call 911.
- Don't use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove or other fuel-burning device inside your home, basement or garage, or near a window.
- Don't run a car or truck inside a garage attached to your house, even if you leave the door open.
- Don't heat your house with a gas oven.

Let's move on to our final and most deadly topic, private motor vehicles.

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**Slide 30: Private Motor Vehicles (PMVs)**

In FY15, the Army lost 72 Soldiers to private motor vehicle accidents! Those 72 deaths accounted for 87% of all the fatal off-duty accidents during that time frame. Note that 11 of the 72 fatalities were Soldiers on foot or a bicycle that were struck by a motor vehicle. From FY11- FY15, each year, we lost an average of 84 Soldiers to PMV accidents. Over one third involved Soldiers on motorcycles. Recreational vehicles, such as ATVs and snowmobiles, can also be killers and we average roughly two fatalities per year.

Some of you have experienced the loss of a Family member, friend or fellow Soldier in an automobile or motorcycle accident. Do you remember how that loss affected you and the loved ones of the deceased? The next time you get the urge to take an unnecessary risk while operating any type of vehicle, think about those you would leave behind. The next time you see a fellow Soldier exhibiting risky behavior, have the personal courage to intervene. That Soldier's life could depend on it.

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**Slide 31: Army Driving Myths**

Here you see a few common myths related to driving. The first statement is a tricky one. While alcohol is a factor in some fatal PMV-4 accidents, it's not the number one factor. Speeding and a lack of seatbelt use are more commonly cited.

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The second myth addresses an issue that is becoming extremely common. According to a Virginia Tech Transportation Institute study, engaging in visual-manual subtasks such as reaching for a phone, dialing and texting triples the risk of getting into a crash. As a driver, you are already "multitasking"... using visual, cognitive and manual skills to drive safely. Adding an unnecessary distraction takes your attention away from one of the necessary tasks and places you and others at risk. For more information on distracted driving, check out [www.distraction.gov](http://www.distraction.gov).

Now let's discuss the "other guy" as the primary cause of accidents involving motorcycles. On average, more than 50% of all motorcycle accidents are single vehicle. Speeding and loss of control cause the majority of the accidents. The Army documented 26 fatalities due to motorcycle accidents in FY15 and excessive speed was cited in 6 (13%) of them.

The final statement is not only a myth for bad accidents, it's a myth for minor accidents, as well. Wearing a helmet could make the difference between life and death in ANY motorcycle accident. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2014, helmets saved the lives of an estimated 1,669 motorcyclists and 660 more could have been saved had they all worn helmets.

Now let's look at some driving trends.

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### **Slide 32: How Do You Define Yourself?**

While fatal PMV accidents are declining, we're still seeing far too many. Last year, nearly half of these type accidents involved an act of indiscipline (e.g., drinking and driving, excessive speed, or not wearing seat belts). Many involved more than one.

It is a privilege to operate a private motor vehicle, and the safe operation of a vehicle is an individual responsibility. Most Soldiers are disciplined; they comply with requirements and operate their vehicle in a safe manner at all times. The undisciplined Soldier simply may not know the requirements for safe operation. The indisciplined Soldier, on the other hand, willfully disregards rules and regulations and has a much greater chance of becoming a fatality.

Ask yourself the following question:

Do I behave in a disciplined manner off duty and do I take action when I see my family, friends or peers engaging in undisciplined or indisciplined behavior?

It's not enough to simply be aware of hazards. You have to actively balance the risks in order to keep yourself and others safe.

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### **Slide 33: Speeding is Indisciplined Behavior**

This slide tells the tale of speed. Excessive speed was reported as a contributing factor in 6 (13%) of the 46 PMV-4 fatalities and in 8 (13%) of the 26 motorcycle fatalities in FY15.

That's 15 Soldiers who lost their lives last fiscal year because they lacked the discipline to obey the speed limit.

In addition to the risk of injury or death from speeding, there are other consequences you may face. Depending on the state, a driver caught speeding may have to pay a large fine, be charged with reckless driving, lose or have points assessed on their license, or spend time in jail.

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### **Slide 34: Motorcycle Video**

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### **Slide 35: Motorcycles**

Here is a significant fact about motorcycles: The Army estimates only a small number of all Soldiers - 12-15% - ride motorcycles, yet last fiscal year over 36% of all Soldiers who died in an off-duty accident died in a motorcycle crash.

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### **Slide 36: Personal Protective Equipment**

From head to toe, good quality personal protective equipment (PPE) is an essential part of a motorcycle rider's gear. Wearing a helmet is an obvious way to reduce the severity of a head injury, or prevent it altogether, ***and there is no question that a full-face helmet provides the most protection.***

Many Soldiers believe they don't have to wear a helmet if riding in a "no helmet" state. This is NOT true. An approved helmet, along with other PPE, is required at all times for all Army military personnel operating or riding on a motorcycle, moped or ATV— on or off duty and on or off an installation. Additionally, Army civilian personnel are required to wear the same PPE when:

- On a military installation
- In a duty status (on & off an installation)
- Operating a DoD-owned motorcycle

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Motorcycle jackets and pants constructed of abrasion-resistant materials such as leather, Kevlar® or Cordura®, and those that contain impact-absorbing padding are strongly encouraged. Riders are also encouraged to select PPE that incorporates fluorescent colors and retro-reflective material.

If you think the cost of buying PPE is too high, consider the cost of not wearing it. As the slide says, it truly is worth every dime, every time!

*Next slide*

**Slide 37: Motorcycle Training**

You must, and I say again, YOU MUST successfully complete a Basic RiderCourse before operating a motorcycle. AR 385-10 requires that you be properly trained and licensed.

The Army Progressive Motorcycle Program is comprised of four courses. Each is designed to keep motorcycle operator training current and to sustain or enrich rider skills.

Within 12 months of completing the BRC, Soldiers must undergo a second round of training based on the type of motorcycle they ride. For the sport bike rider, there is the Military SportBike RiderCourse (MSRC). For all others, there is the Basic RiderCourse 2 (BRC 2), also known as the Experienced RiderCourse.

Sustainment training in the form of the BRC 2 or the MSRC is mandatory every five years after initial completion.

For individuals who have been deployed for 180 days or longer, there is an additional requirement to attend the Motorcycle Refresher Training (MRT) course. This course can be taught at the local level without a certified rider coach.

These classes are free to Soldiers. As an added bonus, you may receive one hour of college credit for completing the BRC. Motorcycle skills are perishable and need to be refreshed occasionally. It looks easy, but it takes a great deal of practice, coordination, and mental attention to ride a motorcycle and it takes constant practice to maintain proficiency. The proper training will provide you with a clear picture of what right looks like.

*Next slide*

**Slide 38: Riding Tip**

The acronym SEE stands for Search, Evaluate & Execute:

Search around you for potential hazards. Searching provides a rider with information needed to make good decisions and take proper action.

Evaluate any possible hazards such as turning cars. Evaluation includes anticipating potential problems and developing a course of action in your mind to deal with those problems if they occur.

Execute the proper action to avoid the hazard. A skilled rider is a decisive rider. Resist the urge to pause or second-guess your decision. Time and space are at a premium. Act decisively and immediately to maximize your response time and to keep your safety cushion as large as possible.

SEEing will allow you to get the proper picture to take ownership of your riding safety by identifying hazards and implementing controls to avoid becoming a statistic.

*Next slide*

**Slide 39: Private Motor Vehicle - 4 (PMV-4) Video**

Play

*Next slide*

**Slide 40: Autos/Sedans, SUVs, Trucks and Vans**

Wearing seatbelts, obeying the speed limit and refusing to drink and drive are extremely important factors in preventing vehicle accidents and injuries.

State and host nation seat belt use laws vary; however, AR 385-10, The Army Safety Program, does not vary. The standard for Soldiers is that occupant protective devices (which includes seat belts) will always be worn when driving or riding in a PMV whether on or off the installation. Additionally, the vehicle operator is responsible for informing passengers of the requirement and the senior occupant is responsible for ensuring its enforcement.

In at least six of the FY15 off-duty fatalities in automobiles, Soldiers were not wearing their seat belts.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHSTA), buckling up is the single most effective thing you can do to protect yourself in a crash. Seat belts save over 13,000 lives every year!

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It is also important to understand that airbags are designed to work with seatbelts, not replace them. If your airbag deploys and you aren't wearing a seatbelt you could be thrown into it. That sudden and potentially violent movement could injure or kill you.

*Next slide*

**Slide 41: Distracted Driving**

Now let's talk a bit more about a disturbing trend we mentioned earlier. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, at any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 people are using cellphones or manipulating electronic devices while driving. In 2014, 3,179 people were killed in crashes involving a distracted driver.

When you drive a car or ride a motorcycle, you are multitasking. Your brain, hands, and eyes are all working together to keep you on the road, in your lane, and safe from other drivers. Doing another activity that distracts you from the primary task of controlling the vehicle can leave you vulnerable to an accident. Staying focused while driving is a necessity!

Distracted driving activities include:

- Texting or talking on a cellphone
- Eating and drinking
- Talking to passengers
- Grooming
- Using a navigation system or reading – including maps
- Watching a video or adjusting an audio system

These activities can increase the chance of a motor vehicle crash.

AR 385-10, which is the standard, prohibits texting and driving, as well as cellphone use while driving. Use of a cellphone is restricted to hands-free devices only. This applies to ALL Soldiers at ALL times.

*Next slide*

**Slide 42: Driving Fatigued**

Fatigue slows reaction time and leads to higher incidents of traffic accidents. In fact, fatigued and drowsy drivers cause an estimated 100,000 police-reported crashes each year and these types of crashes are more likely to result in a fatality.

Why, you ask? Because 24 hours with no sleep makes you just as dangerous on the road as someone with a .08 blood alcohol level. Like a drunk driver, the drowsy driver's judgment, reaction time, and memory are impaired.

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Doctors also point out that drowsiness is not a warning sign; it's the last thing that happens before you fall asleep.

Do you really want to risk the consequences of driving fatigued? Wouldn't it be better to take a nap? Yes, you'll arrive a few hours later than planned, but isn't that better than not arriving at all?

The next time you hit the road for a long trip, make sure you're rested.

*Next slide*

**Slide 43: ATV/ROV Safety Tips**

Not all off-road vehicles are the same. All too often, the all-terrain vehicle (ATV) is confused with the recreational off-highway vehicle (ROV). There are actually some very significant differences between the two, even if both types of off-roaders are four-wheeled and used for similar types of recreation.

If you are operating an ATV or ROV, it is extremely important to get the proper training for that specific vehicle type. Training is normally available through the dealer where you purchased it. If you acquire a used ATV or ROV, training information is available from ATVSafety.gov, the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America or the Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association (<http://www.rohva.org/>). You can also access these websites and other ATV and ROV information through the Recreational Vehicles section of the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center's website.

Remember, online training is a great tool, but hands-on is always the preferred method.

All the Gear, All the Time (ATGATT) cannot be stressed enough! Wear an approved helmet, goggles, gloves, over-the-ankle boots, long-sleeve shirt, and long pants. According to AR 385-10, during off-road operations, operators and riders must use additional PPE, such as knee and shin guards and padded full-fingered gloves.

Once again, it is all about balancing the risks with safety measures. Get the right training, wear the appropriate riding gear, and check your local laws. Some states require off-road vehicle decals and have designated riding areas. Many ATV accidents occur at places other than approved riding areas.

*Next slide*

**Slide 44: Individual/Leader Responsibilities**

The good news is, we have seen a recent decline in the number of PMV accidents; however, we still have a long way to go to eliminate the leading causal factors of PMV fatalities.

Remember, no one is immune to vehicle accidents. It is your responsibility to follow these simple risk reduction controls and operate your vehicle in accordance with Army regulatory guidance, and state and host nation laws.

Leaders, ensure you are engaging your Soldiers and providing the information required for them to safely operate their motor vehicles off duty.

*Next slide*

**Slide 45: Maintaining the Proper Balance Video**

Play

*Next slide*

**Slide 46: Maintaining the Proper Balance Will Keep Our Army Safe!**

YOU are the KEY to helping us achieve the Army's ultimate goal: Zero preventable accidents.

As you go about your daily activities—on duty or off duty—make the effort to be aware of the associated risks and balance those risks with your personal safety and the safety of those you love.

*Next slide*

**Slide 47: Army Safe = Army Strong**

Army Safe is Army Strong!

*This concludes today's briefing.*