



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY FIRES CENTER OF EXCELLENCE AND FORT SILL
455 NW MCNAIR AVENUE, SUITE 100
FORT SILL, OKLAHOMA 73503-5000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

ATZR-CSS

27 March 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Commanding General's FY13 Summer Safety Message

1. References:

- a. TB MED 507, Heat Stress Control and Heat Casualty Management, 7 Mar 03.
- b. Memorandum, HQ TRADOC, ATBO-M, 05 Feb 13, Subject: Heat Illness Prevention Program.
- c. OPORD 016-13, 2013 Fort Sill Summer Safety Campaign, 22 Mar 13.
- d. Army Summer Safety Campaign FY13, <https://safety.army.mil>, Available 03 May 13.

2. Purpose. To provide summer safety guidance to all Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill organizations, leaders and personnel.

3. General. The period between Memorial Day and Labor Day, also known as the Critical Days of Summer, is the time when Soldiers, Department of the Army Civilians (DAC) and Family members are traditionally exposed to the year's greatest risks. Even though the Critical Days of Summer do not start until Memorial Day, we in Southwest Oklahoma experience extreme weather variations and occasional temperature spikes that impose immediate risk due to lack of acclimatization and unpreparedness. With temperatures climbing and longer daylight hours upon us, outdoor recreation, sport activities, and travel pose increased risk to all personnel. Heat related illness is a significant threat requiring careful planning, quality training, and engaged leadership to minimize the risk of personnel becoming heat casualties. Work and training rarely stop due to hot weather causing increased potential for heat related illness and possible loss of life. All Soldiers, DAC, and leaders must be familiar with proper acclimatization, risk factors, prevention, and treatment of heat illness in order to reduce the threat to our personnel. Our past accident history demands our continued vigilance in heat illness prevention.

4. Last year during the Critical Days of Summer, Fort Sill experienced one Class A Soldier Privately Owned Motorcycle (POM) fatality (off-duty) due to indiscipline, speed, and alcohol. Five Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) accidents were recorded resulting in four serious injuries; speed and inattentiveness were common factors. Three Privately Owned Weapon (POW) negligent discharges resulted in two personnel requiring surgery, and one receiving stitches to

ATZR-CSS

SUBJECT: Commanding General's FY13 Summer Safety Message

the palm of his hand. Overconfidence was the common factor. Due to the high summer temperatures, 24 personnel became heat casualties and required medical attention beyond first aid. Overexertion resulting in heat exhaustion accounted for 80% of our recorded heat casualties. Plan ahead, identify potential hazards, assess risks, and ensure personnel are prepared to take appropriate action to protect themselves and others. The following can assist in your prevention efforts.

a. Heat Illness Prevention. Outdoor activities are one way to enjoy the warm weather of spring and summer. Soldiers, DAC, and Family members should be mindful that high temperatures pose a significant risk for heat injury. According to the U.S. Army Public Health Command, **prevention and early recognition/treatment** of heat injuries are critical to curbing heat-related injuries and deaths. The three most common heat illnesses are heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and the most serious being heat stroke. Heat stroke is a medical emergency that without proper treatment can be fatal. Organizations will ensure training is conducted and emergency action plans are current and rehearsed. Real medical emergencies do not give second chances. Use of the Arm Immersion Cooling System, Ice Sheets, Web Bulb Thermometer, Battle Buddies and adherence to the Work/Rest cycle are all proven methods for prevention and immediate action.

b. Motorcycle Mentorship Program (MMP). The MMP provides new and unseasoned riders the opportunity to work with experienced riders to learn beneficial skills and techniques associated with riding a motorcycle. This program is a Fort Sill requirement that supports rider education and promotes responsible motorcycle riding, while mitigating risk and reducing accidents. Leadership involvement in the MMP is critical to Soldiers' safety and the success of our motorcycle safety program.

c. Travel Risk Planning System (TRiPS). Driver distraction, alcohol use, speed, and fatigue are common contributors to off-duty motor vehicle accidents. Leaders and supervisors will ensure Soldiers going on leave or pass understand the risks involved with travel and ways to mitigate them. The TRiPS system incorporates risk management and facilitates a dialogue between supervisor and subordinate prior to POV/POM travel.

d. Water-Related Recreational Activities. As temperatures increase, many of our personnel and Family members will be drawn to water-related activities such as boating or swimming. Swimming pools, ponds, lakes, rivers, or oceans pose unique hazards that must be identified before participating. Assess your activity and take appropriate measures to mitigate risk. Not wearing a personal flotation device and alcohol use continue to be the top leading factors in water-related deaths across the Army.

e. Privately Owned Weapons (POW). Whether you are a hunter or a recreational shooter, if you own a weapon you should know everything about it, including how to properly load, unload, clear, disassemble, and reassemble it. You should also know how to properly handle, store, and transport that weapon. The Army has already experienced three POW fatalities this fiscal year due to unfamiliarity with the weapon, mixing guns and alcohol, and being mistaken for an

ATZR-CSS

SUBJECT: Commanding General's FY13 Summer Safety Message

intruder by a dependent. Proper education and individual discipline in following basic weapon safety rules are essential for safe weapon handling and use. Basic POW safety courses are available on a quarterly basis; contact the Fort Sill Safety Office for details and registration. Basic firearm safety rules are:

- (1) Treat every weapon as if it were loaded.
- (2) Never point a weapon at anything you do not intend to shoot.
- (3) Keep your trigger finger straight and OFF the trigger until you are ready to fire.
- (4) Keep your weapon on safe until you intend to fire.

5. As we focus our efforts on summer accident prevention, do not lose sight of hazards associated with other activities such as fishing, picnics, cookouts, hiking, and lawn care. Environmental conditions such as severe weather, sun exposure, poisonous plants, and animals can also have a negative impact on these activities without proper planning.

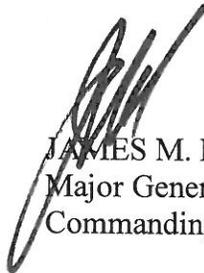
6. Engaged leaders, Soldiers, and civilian personnel make a difference. Continue to promote and use available tools and resources in your prevention efforts that include:

a. U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center at <https://safety.army.mil>.

b. TRADOC Safety Office at <https://www.tradoc.army.mil/safe/index.htm>.

c. Fort Sill Safety Office and Safety SharePoint at <https://cac.tkeportal.army.mil/sites/fcoe/Safety/default.aspx>.

7. Conclusion. Leader and individual involvement is key to a safe and successful summer and the uncertain days that precede it. Be alert and vigilant. Your focus and commitment to safety are critical in the weeks and months ahead. Take care of each other and enjoy the activities associated with the summer season.



JAMES M. MCDONALD
Major General, USA
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:
All Fort Sill Organizations