



# ***News Release***

**U.S. ARMY SUSTAINMENT COMMAND**

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## **Summer Safety Saves Lives**

*By Barbara Toner  
ASC Public Affairs*

*ROCK ISLAND, Ill.* – Thanks to a team effort, no off-duty Soldiers died Memorial Day weekend, unlike 2008, when accidents took four lives.

Memorial Day weekend 2008 was a deadly one for the Army, according to the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center. Four people died between May 23 and 26: two on motorcycles, one using an all-terrain vehicle, and another while attempting to rescue swimmers in Florida. Five of eight non-fatal accidents reported during that time involved motorcycles.

During Memorial Day weekend 2009, however, no Army personnel died because of off-duty accidents.

“We attribute this to an engaged leadership and Soldiers being responsible for themselves and their families and looking out for each other,” said Jennifer Albert, command information manager/media relations chief of the Strategic Communications Directorate for the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center.

The National Safety Council has declared June National Safety Month, which the Army safety community heartily supports to encourage everyone to have a safe and enjoyable summer.

The Army wants to continue this trend with its Summer Safety 2009 campaign, designed to make Soldiers, family members, civilians and contractors aware of the risks associated with summertime activities and take action to prevent accidents.

“We have a saying here that ‘Accident Prevention plus Health Promotion equals Fighting Strength,’” said John Manfre, AMC safety director.

Awareness of safety risks empowers people to take the necessary steps to keep themselves and their families safe, said Jerry Waibel, ASC safety manager.

“The Summer Safety Campaign is a command-wide message to leaders for engagement, and to the workforce for increased awareness. Summer is a time of increased movement in the form of training, recreation, and vacations, and has historically resulted in increased mishaps,” said Waibel.

Motorcycles and home repairs pose the highest summertime risk to adults, while motor vehicle occupant injuries, poisonings, fire and burn injuries, pedestrian injuries and drowning present the highest risks for children 14 years old and younger, he said.

Water sports can be fun but deadly if combined with factors such as inattention, reckless behavior, excessive speed, or alcohol use. With the U.S. Coast Guard expecting more than 10 million boats to navigate U.S. waterways this year, people must remain aware of the safety risks associated with recreational boating.

And while swimming presents one of the highest risks to children, adults also need to be cautious. The Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center reported the deaths of three Soldiers in water-related accidents last year, and one Soldier this year suffered permanent disability by diving into shallow water.

Just because deployed Soldiers, civilians, and contractors don’t have a motorcycle or boat handy doesn’t mean they are immune to summer safety risks. Safety is important to ensure people can better handle the stress of deployment, said Manfre.

“Long hours, heat, deadlines, briefings, heavy industrial work, endless coordinations, people in a hurry - all of these can combine and conspire to wreak havoc on a person’s safety and health status,” he said.

The Summer Safety Campaign addresses a variety of safety risks on the U. S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center Web site, <https://safety.army.mil>. At the bottom right of the page, in the

Campaign Corner box, viewers can click on the Safe Summer logo to access articles, posters, and videos on approximately 20 topics.

Additionally, the Installation Management Command has made its safety brochure available to the entire U.S. Army audience. Access this by going to: [http://www.ftmeade.army.mil/pages/safety/spring\\_summer\\_09.pdf](http://www.ftmeade.army.mil/pages/safety/spring_summer_09.pdf). This brochure addresses many of the same subjects as the Army Safety Campaign, but organizes them into a series of general topics, such as Family Readiness and Natural Disasters, Household Safety, Recreation Safety, and Home Project/Hobby Safety. Also, the brochure can be printed from the Web site, making it both convenient to access and portable.

For deployed troops and civilians, safety awareness means situational awareness: knowing their physical and mental condition, equipment, and operating environment, said Manfre.

“If (situational awareness) is ongoing, it will be easier for personnel to keep a running risk assessment - akin to a personnel asset inventory - and do those things that will foster safe mission accomplishment, and ultimately a safe return home. Those things include knowing one’s craft - usually not an issue - and not only talking about safety, but also doing something about it,” he said.

Safety awareness during deployment includes exercising to reduce stress and maintaining good physical conditioning, adequate sleep and good nutrition.

Safety awareness also means that people know their physical and mental limits, said Manfre, “throttling back when they are getting to the edge, and letting someone know.”

-30-

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