**Semper Safe**

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| **LABOR DAY SAFETY** |
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 Labor Day for most people signifies the end of summer and the vacation season as well as the beginning of school for many students. This holiday was first celebrated September 5, 1882 to honor the American worker. Over the last 130 years industry has evolved especially with transportation. We have fast automobiles and major highways that allow us to move around quickly. This evolution also created greater risks for injury or death. Automobile mishaps are the leading causes of death especially during the Critical Days of Summer. As we go out on the roadways this holiday, it is critical that we continue to manage the risks associated with motor vehicle travel as well as other off-duty activities. Your time off should be enjoyable and does not have to result in a tragedy. Please make plans and preparations so that your holiday activities are safe, keep in mind that historically Labor Day weekend has been the deadliest holiday of the year for Marine Corps personnel.

 Most mishaps **ARE** preventable and we must be aware of the hazards present on our nation’s highways as well as recreational activities. Everyone can mitigate risks. Here are a few tips that can help with your activities:

* Ensure your vehicle is in safe operating condition. Always wear your seat belts!!
* PPE. Wear the proper protective equipment when riding a motorcycle.
* Swimming. Never swim alone and ensure you are familiar with the area before you “dive in”.
* Scuba diving. Certification is a must and only dive with a certified dive buddy; never alone.
* Boating. Take a safe boating course. Intoxicated operators cause a significant portion of all serious boating accidents.
* Personal Watercraft (PWC). Wear a personal floatation device and utilize the engine “kill switch”.
* All terrain vehicles/off-road motorcycling. Wear protective equipment/clothing and utilize the buddy system.
* Barbecuing. Utilize approved lighter fluids, never gasoline. When turning off propane grills shut the propane bottle valve off and let the gas in the lines burn out.
* Alcohol. Reduces performance, impairs judgment and increases the willingness to take risks. If you choose to drink, do so responsibly and have a designated driver.
* Use ORM or some form of risk management to ensure your activities are mishap free.

 You’ve worked hard and earned a well deserved break. Your health and well being are important so be prepared and use self-discipline in order to a safe holiday.

 **“Don’t let your guard down--Safety is a 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year responsibility!”**

***As Marines, Sailors and Civil Servants we live by our core values. So think before you jeopardize the safety of yourself, your fellow Marines, Sailors, civilian employees or***

***family members, and remember SEMPER SAFE!***

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