



SEMPER SAFE



“Holiday Safety”

“♪It’s the most wonderful time of the year.♪” The holiday season is upon us; time to take some well deserved leave and spend time with family and friends. Usually a time to be cheerful, but history tells us the Marine Corps will likely suffer injuries and or fatalities during this holiday period. Simple activities like hanging holiday lights, walking on snow/ice covered surfaces or at home on leave chopping fire wood present special risks to our well-being, but none present as many serious risks as operating a motor vehicle. Sadly every year between Thanksgiving and New Year holidays Marines lose their lives in motor vehicle accidents. The basic causes haven’t changed much over the years; however, the most common cause is lack of personal responsibility. The good news is YOU have the power to avoid a deadly or life-changing mishap. See the following safety tips and enjoy the holidays.

SEATBELTS: Seatbelts are designed to restrain you. Don’t move the vehicle until all passengers are buckled up. Ensure your shoulder belt fits snugly across the middle of the chest and shoulder. Never tuck the shoulder belt under your arm. Don’t recline seat backs to the point where the shoulder belt is loose. Seat belts will increase your chance of surviving a crash by 50 percent. Bottom Line: Seatbelts work. Use them!

CELL PHONES: Drivers on Marine Corps installations shall not use cellular phones while the vehicle is in operation, unless they are using a hands-free device. Hands-free does NOT mean speaker phone. Bottom Line: Hand held Cell Phones Distract!

SPEED: Exceeding the posted speed limit or driving at an unsafe speed is the most common driver error in fatal accidents. I know you’re eager to get to your destination, but being patient will get you there alive. Bottom Line: Speed Kills!

ALCOHOL (and other drugs): Alcohol dulls reaction time, impairs attention and slows information processing of visual cues, perception, and psychomotor skills. Keep in mind the legal blood alcohol concentration limits in most states is .08. A “Designated Driver” and the “Arrive Alive” programs are proven tools to staying alive and out of the courtroom. Bottom Line: If you drink, don’t drive!

FATIGUE: Like an intoxicated driver, a fatigued driver performs poorly, too. If you’re planning a trip this holiday season, plan for the worst weather and allow adequate time to reach and return from your location. Pushing yourself is inviting a disaster. Bottom Line: Get plenty of rest before starting trips and make frequent stops.

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