



## Staying Safe and Healthy this Spring and Summer

*“We all must do everything we can to be safer this summer. Each of us must do our part to keep everyone around us safe off-duty, as we do on-duty. Fundamental military lessons of working together, exercising leadership, focusing on the mission, and having the courage to say no to a risky situation are all essential to enjoying the summer and returning to your units.”*

**—Chuck Hagel, Secretary of Defense**

The spring and summer recreation season is upon us. A small investment of time in assessing your surroundings, and planning your activities, yields a rich future. In preparation for summer recreation, June is [National Safety Month](#) and the U.S. Army is implementing its Summer Safety Campaign [“Know the Signs. Know What’s Right, Do What’s Right.”](#) to help Soldiers, Civilians and family members understand that they will be exposed to risk more often than they think and it’s critically important to prepare now for what lies ahead. The Army is highlighting three primary areas for special attention this summer.

### Recreation Safety

Before heading out to swim this summer, consider ... Are you next? Expect the Unexpected and Wear Your Life Jacket! Wear your life jacket and encourage those you love to wear one too. In addition, it’s important to learn to swim well, and always swim with a buddy. It only takes about 20 seconds for a child to drown and 60 seconds for an adult. Never let your children swim alone.

If you plan on boating, take a boater safety course and boat with a buddy. Courses are offered free on-line and most states, [U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary](#) and [U.S. Power Squadrons](#) offer courses. While underway, wear your life jacket, if the watercraft has an emergency cut-off switch wristband, wear it and remember ... alcohol and boating do not mix.

### Motorcycle Safety

May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month. The National campaign urges drivers to “share the road” with motorcyclists; the Army is placing a greater emphasis on personal responsibility. Nationally, many riders are killed when other drivers don’t allow cyclists room to maneuver to prevent a collision. Often alcohol, excessive speed or lack of personal protective equipment, play a role.

Every rider must maintain proficiency: The [Motorcycle Safety Foundation](#) provides basic, intermediate and sustainment courses for enthusiasts to learn from and keep one another safe! Finally, ride responsibly: look out for others ... they may not look out for you!

### Distracted Driving

Texting while driving places millions of Americans who drive at risk every day. As texting becomes more widespread, the risk grows. [Distracted driving](#) also includes: talking on the phone, and sending e-mails. These actions take your attention from driving.

There is NO on-the-job communication that is so important you can’t safely pull to the shoulder of the road and answer the call, or wait to get to a safe location to return the phone call. USACE operational and construction work sites should be “text-free zones.”

## Key Messages

- The U.S. Army is implementing its Summer Safety Campaign “Know the Signs. Know What’s Right, Do What’s Right.” to help Soldiers, Civilians and family members stay safe this summer.
- USACE is the leading federal provider of outdoor recreation hosting more than 370 million visits annually to its more than 420 lake and river projects in 43 states.
- Wear your life jacket and encourage those you love to wear one, too.
- USACE statistics identify that 89 percent of water-related fatalities involve those not wearing a life jacket. The most at risk group is males between the ages of 18-35 not wearing a life jacket and who swim in non-designated areas.
- May is Motorcycle Awareness Month—review your owner’s manual, inspect your equipment and make sure you’re safe to ride.
- USACE is a distracted-driving free organization: NO on-the-job communication is so important it can’t wait until it’s safe to respond.

## Facts & Figures

- About 93 percent of people who die in boating-related accidents were on boats where the operator hadn’t taken a boater safety course.
- Boater safety courses are available at [www.boat-ed.com](http://www.boat-ed.com), the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, <http://cgaux.org/boatinged>, and U.S. Power Squadron, [www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org).
- Motorcycle-related deaths have increased 55 percent since 2000. The Motorcycle Safety Foundation, [www.msf-usa.org](http://www.msf-usa.org), provides motorcycle safety information and courses for riders.
- In 2011, 3,331 people were killed in distracted driving crashes and some 387,000 people were injured in distracted driver crashes. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov) provides valuable information on preventing distracted driving.