



September 2009

The lazy days of summer are slowly winding down and holiday decorations are already appearing on store shelves. For some of us, the thought of frigid temperatures looming just around the corner is hard to imagine; but for many of our Soldiers and Families around the globe, the first snowfall is just a few weeks away.

This month, with temperatures dropping and days getting shorter, we will say goodbye to summer and officially bring the Army's Safe Summer 2009 campaign to a close. As our Safe Summer campaign wraps up following the Labor Day weekend, our Army Safe Fall/Winter campaign with online support materials will kick into gear. This year's campaign will focus on providing risk management information on a variety of cold weather topics, including winter driving safety and injury prevention. Using articles, posters, videos and more, the campaign will work to ensure that all members of our Army team understand the importance of being prepared for any situation when it comes to fall and winter safety. For this reason, we have selected "No Time to Chill" as this year's Army Safe Fall/Winter campaign theme.

In an effort to encourage Army Families to remain prepared for all potential hazards, the Ready Army campaign begins this month as part of the Department of Homeland Security's National Preparedness Month. Using the motto "Get a Kit, Make a Plan, Be Informed," the campaign identifies steps that are vital to emergency preparedness. These important steps, which are outlined at www.ready.gov, include getting an emergency supply kit, making a Family emergency plan, becoming informed about potential emergency situations and getting involved in local community preparedness and emergency response efforts.

The Ready Army and Army Safe Fall/Winter campaigns are just two programs that help every member of our Band of Brothers and Sisters play an active role in ensuring the safety of the Army team. Maintaining an active commitment to safety and avoiding complacency is extremely important today as our forces are stretched around the globe doing vital work to protect our nation.

Our Army is extremely busy and going through a huge rotation of forces. We continue to operate at a high OPTEMPO, with units simultaneously moving in and out of two theaters of operation and CONUS. This heightened OPTEMPO places additional stressors on Soldiers, civilians and their Families and causes the probability and severity of risk to increase significantly.

When we are asked to perform the same tasks time and again, the simplicity and repetitiveness can lead us down the dangerous path of complacency. Nothing we do in the training for, or execution of, a mission should ever be taken lightly or executed as "routine." Make sure your head is always in the game and on a swivel and that you are aware of your surroundings and the dangers that are present. We have seen that risk, if not properly planned for with effective mitigation measures, can have tragic results.

Statistics show that when Soldiers return from the rigors of the battlefield they face an even deadlier enemy back home — complacency. Just when they think they can lower their guard, forget their battle buddy and get into a "normal" routine, that's when accidents will most likely occur. The Band of Brothers and Sisters must follow our Soldiers home, especially during off-duty activities. Families, friends and peers are our Soldier's battle buddies at home. They must provide the watchful eye and appropriate intervention our Soldiers need when their guard is down. Look to the Family Engagement Kit and the BOSS Safety Factor kit at the USACR/Safety Center Web site at <https://safety.army.mil> to provide tools to assist you in having a meaningful and purposeful dialogue with your Soldier while they are home.

Finally, as many of you already know, the USACR/Safety Center has developed a safety "lite" version of its Web page. You are now able to access this site for many of our tools and programs at <https://safety.army.mil/lite>. Based upon feedback from users in the field, we continue to refine this site to ensure we are meeting your requirements. Please let us know if we are not hitting the mark.

Thanks for all the sacrifices you and your Families have made in the protection of our great nation.

Army Safe is Army Strong!

WILLIAM T. WOLF
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding