



SAFETY CHRONICLES

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Motorcycle Safety

By Mike Duran

With the arrival of summer, Marines spend more time riding motorcycles and new riders join the ranks. While riding a motorcycle is a fun activity, you must never forget it is a dangerous activity. While you may do everything right when riding, you are still at risk by other vehicle operators, pedestrians, animals, etc.

All Marines who plan to purchase or operate a motorcycle are required to complete Level I (initial) Training. The Marine Corps offers the Basic Riders Course (BRC) as initial training and is provided at no cost to Marines and Sailors on all Marine Corps installations. The course is taught over 2 days and provides the rider with the information and training required to obtain a motorcycle endorsement while teaching safe riding skills. All the necessary equipment, to include personal protective equipment (PPE), is provided to the student during this course.

Motorcycle riders are required to attend Level II (advanced) Training within 120 days after completing the BRC. The Marine Corps offers two types of advanced training courses: Motorcycle Sports Bike Rider Course (MSRC) and Experienced Riders Course (ERC). These 1-day courses are designed to hone riders' skills and provide the expertise to negotiate potential obstacles.

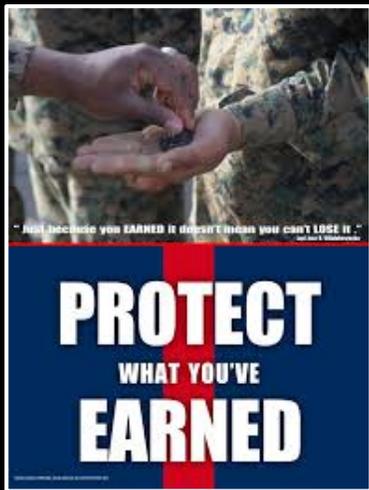
Lastly, motorcycle riders must complete refresher training every 3 years. Refresher training must include at a minimum Level II Training, e.g., MSRC or ERC; or Level III, e.g., Total Control, Bike Safe or Yamaha Champions Riding School. Level III Training focus on cornering, braking and awareness to enhance already developed safe riding skills.

In accordance with MCO 5100.19F, motorcycle riders and passengers are required to wear the following PPE when operating a motorcycle:

- DOT approved helmet,
- ANSI standard shatter-proof eye protection,
- Long-sleeve shirt or riding jacket,
- Full fingered gloves,
- Full length pants, and
- Sturdy over the ankle boots.

Remember motorcycles are the smaller vehicles on the road and it is difficult for motorists to see them; therefore, the wearing of high-visibility protective gear is highly recommended. Ride defensively...identify escape routes...always be aware of what other motorists are doing whether you are stopped at a traffic light or on the move. This fiscal year the Marine Corps has suffered 10 fatal motorcycle mishaps. **The most common causal factor in these mishaps were skill-based errors.**

Before you get on your motorcycle this summer, ensure you have completed the required training, attend your monthly motorcycle club meetings, conduct regular inspections of your motorcycle, ride defensively and protect yourself with the minimum required PPE. Stay vigilant and enjoy the ride!



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Tick Safety

By John Davis

It's the season for fun in the sun, cookouts with family and friends, and pesky insects bent on ruining our much needed fun. One of the most troubling insects in the United States are ticks. Ticks are capable of spreading potentially life-threatening infectious diseases with symptoms ranging from chills to rashes, and may result in developing neurological problems to even death.

The most common symptoms of tick-related illnesses are:

- **Chills/Fever:** Patients can experience a fever at varying degrees at time of onset.
- **Aches and pains:** Symptoms include headache, fatigue, joint pain and muscle aches. The severity and time of onset of these symptoms can depend on the disease and the patient's personal tolerance level.
- **Rash:** Ticks can transfer Lyme disease to a living host. Lyme disease (<https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/index.html>), southern tick-associated rash illness (STARI), Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF), Ehrlichiosis and Tularemia can result in distinctive rashes.



Patient with Lyme disease



Patient with STARI

Tick-borne diseases can result in mild symptoms treatable at home to severe infections requiring hospitalization. Although easily treated with antibiotics, these diseases can be difficult for physicians to diagnose. However, early recognition and treatment of the infection decreases the risk of serious complications. So see your doctor immediately if you were bitten by a tick and experience any of the symptoms described here.

Tick Prevention for You (and Your Pets)

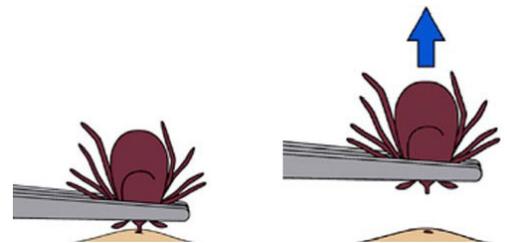
Ticks are small and can be easy to miss, especially if they have latched themselves onto a hairy pet or a spot on your body that is hard to reach or see, such as the top of the head or back.

Ticks are more prevalent in tall grass and wooded areas inhabited by large animals, such as deer. If hiking through the woods, remember to walk in the center of trails to avoid ticks. While most people may be aware of deer ticks, which carry Lyme disease and are found in the Northeast region of the country, it is important to remember that different species of ticks are found across the United States and they carry a variety of other diseases.

Before heading out, dress in a long-sleeve shirt and pants, and consider tucking pants legs into your socks, especially if you will be walking in tall grass or a wooded area. Also, use a tick repellent containing DEET, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions. For prolonged outdoor activities such as camping, look for clothing and camping gear that is treated with permethrin.

Upon returning home from your activity, it is important to perform a thorough tick-check—from head to toe. If you find a tick on your body follow these steps:

- Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
- Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal or seek medical attention as soon as possible.
- After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub or soap and water.
- Dispose of a live tick by submersing it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag/container, wrapping it tightly in tape or flushing it down the toilet. Never crush a tick with your fingers.



Avoid folklore remedies such as "painting" the tick with nail polish or petroleum jelly, or using heat to make the tick detach from the skin. Your goal is to remove the tick as quickly as possible—not waiting for it to detach.

Follow-Up

If you develop a rash or fever within several weeks of removing a tick, see your doctor. Be sure to tell the doctor about your recent tick bite, when the bite occurred, and where you most likely acquired the tick.

Head for High Ground

Never underestimate the power of flood waters. Even a mere six inches of fast-moving water can knock you down. Floods usually develop over a few days and you may be alerted by broadcast warnings and given instructions about evacuation. However, flash floods can occur without warning and they cause more deaths than any other kind of weather condition.

These floods result from heavy rain, dam failure or collapse of a natural dam of debris. Flash flood waters can reach the height of a two-story building. They can move with great speed, carrying trees, large rocks and debris. Flash floods can destroy bridges and buildings. Whether you can swim or not, you could quickly drown in fast moving water.

Here are more reminders about drowning hazards during flood emergencies:

- ◆ Do not work or travel alone.
- ◆ Wear an approved personal flotation device when working in or around water.
- ◆ Do not walk in floodwaters.
- ◆ Supervise children closely. Do not allow them near high water, storm drains and other water hazards.
- ◆ Observe all hazard warnings on roads. Barricades are put in place for your safety, so please do not drive around them.
- ◆ Take the recommended routes; do not try shortcuts.
- ◆ Avoid areas subject to flash flooding such as gullies and creek beds, particularly during wet weather or thunderstorms.
- ◆ Watch for flooding at low areas on the highway, bridges and overpasses.
- ◆ Never drive a vehicle into water if you are not certain of the depth.



- ◆ If the vehicle stalls in rising water, get out to safety rather than attempting to restart it. Climb to higher ground. Nearly half of all flash flood fatalities are auto-related.
- ◆ Be extra cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers. Never go sightseeing during a disaster. Stay away from floods and storms.
- ◆ Avoid the waterfront during a hurricane because of the danger of storm surge. This high water caused by the wind is the greatest killer during hurricanes. The torrential rain of a hurricane can also trigger flash floods inland.
- ◆ Also stay away from the waterfront following an earthquake. A tsunami, a high wave caused by a quake, can sweep over the oceanfront resulting in loss of life.

Floodwater is treacherous. The possibility of drowning is very real if you attempt to cross the water on foot or if you are caught in rising water while operating heavy equipment or an automobile.

For additional tips on this topic and more, visit FEMA's website at <https://www.ready.gov/>.

Reducing Off-Duty Mishaps

By Wayne Adams



Why are the number of Marines and Sailors involved in off-duty mishap-related injury or death increasing? Are the various hazard identification and abatement safety training platforms being employed by leaders and safety professionals throughout Navy-Marine Corps commands comprehensive enough, so as to effectively educate our Marines and Sailors of recognizable off-duty hazards?

According to Anthony J. Militello, PE, CSP, Director, Occupational Safety and Health, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Energy, Installations and Environment, “Over the past 30 months, **202 Marines and Sailors have died in mishaps - the majority (109) were killed while riding a motorcycle or driving a car.**” These are alarming numbers that can and must be reversed and should not be referred to as “**the cost of doing business,**” since most if not all of these

mishaps could have been prevented, while saving the lives of our Marines and Sailors.

After a mishap occurs, the investigation may reveal that those who are charged with administering mishap reduction programs did just about everything they could, to effectively convey comprehensive off-duty hazard identification techniques to Marines and Sailors. If that is the case, then, what happened? Why did the mishap occur?

You may often hear from leaders that **all required safety training was conducted** throughout the command; therefore, Marines and Sailors must employ the hazard identification and abatement techniques they glean during safety stand-downs and subsequent liberty briefs. If this is the case, then the focus should be extended to off-duty performance by individual Marines and Sailors. There is an old adage from prize winning poet, Maya Angelou, “When you know better, you do better.”

Lagging off-duty indicators have shown a significant increase in prohibited behavior across all the services. Some of the prohibited behavior may be attributed to the failure of mid-level leaders, to effectively instill a meaningful sense of responsibility among upper and lower echelon alike; to “do the right thing, even when they believe no one is looking.” Are these mid-level leaders effectively managing Marines and Sailors in such a way that our pillars (Honor, Courage and Commitment) portrayed on-duty are carried over to their off-duty activities?

There are no easy solutions to the challenges facing our leaders who are working diligently to train Marines and Sailors and enforce the rules and regulations to affect behavior conducive to good order and discipline on- and off-duty. Comprehensive and robust **intrusive leadership initiatives** is one factor a leader can employ to significantly reduce off-duty mishaps.

Leaders, you must know the strengths and weaknesses of your Marines and Sailors; promote further strengthening of those identified weaknesses. Leaders must view prohibited behavior as a known safety hazard to total force preservation and good order and discipline. Leaders must confront hazardous behavior and implement measurable and effective controls; **do not chalk up off-duty mishaps as “the cost of doing business.”**

Intrusive leadership may involve further reaching out to your Marines and Sailors while they are on leave and liberty. Reinforce the need for their continued actions regarding Honor, Courage and Commitment. This is a challenge in which failure to reduce off-duty mishaps is not an option. Train and educate Marines and Sailors to effectively recognize recreational off-duty hazards and how to apply practical abatement techniques in order to stay safe from preventable harm.

Leaders, **double-down** on best practiced force preservation initiatives, and reinforce defensive **riding of a motorcycle or driving of a car.** We must preserve the life of every Marine and Sailor, so they can remain in the fight.

