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Wants You



To Be Safe!



The Safety Corner

From the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned

November 15, 2008



This Issue of the Safety Corner Highlights Hunting Safety.

From the Director: The cool mornings and early sunsets are a sure indication that another hunting season is just around the corner. This is the season where Sundays are for football and Saturdays are for hunting, a time honored American tradition that provides hours of outdoor fun.

Hunting is enjoyed for many reasons; it offers you a chance to relax outdoors while becoming one with nature. For many, hunting is a way to get away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, bringing families and friends together for memories that will last a lifetime.

Planning your hunting trip also means having your gear in proper working order. Tree stands, clothing, survival kits, ammunition, and maps should be inspected for signs of wear and tear, and, most importantly, firearms and archery equipment should be cleaned and inspected for signs of wear.

The lasting fun of hunting comes only when it is conducted safely, and safety begins with you. As you join your fellow hunters heading into the woods, remember to review and think about firearm safety each and every time you head out. Have a safe and enjoyable hunt.

You are welcome to pass on and post this newsletter for widest dissemination. Log on the www.mccll.usmc.mil website to download previous editions of the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned Safety Corner as well as our Monthly Newsletters. I look forward to your comments so we can raise awareness, reduce risk and maintain a high level of readiness.

Semper Fidelis,
Col Monte Dunard, Director MCCLL

We welcome suggestions and comments on this Safety Corner. Please send your comments via e-mail to **feedback**, or you may contact us at (703) 432-1279.



Did You Know?

Most people suffer from hypothermia on days when the outside air temperatures range between 30 and 50 degrees.

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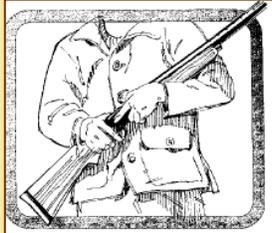
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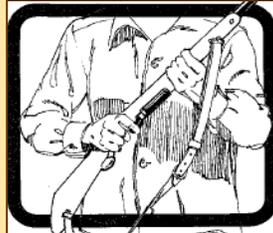
NOVEMBER 2008

Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned
Safety Corner

Note: This report has been compiled from publicly available information and is not official USMC policy. Although information has been gathered from reliable sources the currency and completeness of the information reported herein is subject to change and cannot be guaranteed.



Cradle



Double Hand

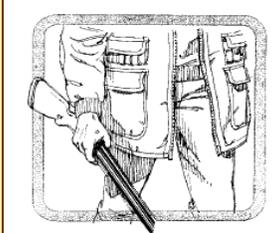


Elbow

Always carry firearms in a safe position with the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.



Shoulder



Trail



Sling

10 Commandments of Firearm Safety

http://www.remington.com/ety/10_commandantstips/1st_commandant.asp

1. Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.
2. Firearms should be unloaded when not actually in use.
3. Don't rely on your gun's safety.
4. Be sure of your target and what's beyond it.
5. Use proper ammunition.
6. If your gun fails to fire when the trigger is pulled, handle with care.
7. Always wear eye and ear protection when shooting.
8. Be sure the barrel is clear of obstructions before shooting.
9. Don't alter or modify your gun. Have it serviced regularly.
10. Learn the mechanical and handling characteristics of the firearm you are using.

The Ten Commandments of Firearms Safety should be etched in your memory forever. Let them govern your actions wherever and whenever you're involved with firearms in the woods, on the range, or in your home.

Basic Survival Kit

http://www.hunter-ed.com/wa/course/9-8_survival_kit.htm

• Water-proof matches/lighter	• Wire saw	• Plastic bag	• Map/compass
• Signal mirror	• Whistle	• Rope/string	• Emergency food/water
• Fire starter/candles	• Flashlight/extra batteries	• First Aid material(s)	• Deck of cards
• Pocket knife	• Tube tent/large	• Emergency blanket	

Tree Stand Safety

- ◆ Wear your harness while climbing and descending
- ◆ Don't use dead trees or telephone poles to hang tree stand
- ◆ Inspect your tree stand before each use
- ◆ Practice setting up your stand before hunting season
- ◆ Always unload your rifle before raising or lowering your rifle from the tree stand
- ◆ **A full body harness offers the best protection**



Don't Leave Safety Up In The Air When Hunting From Tree Stands

<http://cas.psu.edu/docs/agis/news/october00/nd.html>

In an effort to outsmart the elusive whitetailed deer, more and more Pennsylvania hunters are taking to the trees to bag their quarry, says a hunting safety expert in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. "Hunters can climb existing limbs or use ladders, steps or commercial climbers to reach perches 10 to 15 feet off the forest floor," explains Earle Robbins, Tioga County extension director for Penn State Cooperative Extension and a certified hunting safety instructor.

"Tree stands have been very popular with hunters in archery season, and now more hunters are using them during rifle season." Robbins says hunting from tree stands can be more productive, but using them can be dangerous. Nationwide, about 10 hunters every year are killed in falls from tree stands, while many others suffer temporary or permanent injury. "Human error is the main reason for tree stand accidents," Robbins says. "People climb into trees or stands when conditions are wet, icy or windy. They also fall asleep and fall out of the tree or become excited when a deer appears and take one step too far."

Robbins recommends following these safety tips when using tree stands:

- ◆ Do not use weathered, homemade tree stands. "These stands often deteriorate quickly and often are unsafe even when newly installed," Robbins says.
- ◆ Wear a safety belt or harness. These products fit under both arms and are attached to the tree and the hunter. If the stand breaks or slips, the hunter remains in position.
- ◆ Always unload firearms before pulling them up into (or lowering them from) the tree stand.
- ◆ Choose an obviously healthy tree with branches that can support the additional weight. "Make sure the tree has no dead branches or fungal growths nearby or on the trunk," he says. "Mushrooms or fungi on trees can be a sign of ill health."
- ◆ When climbing up or down, always ensure that your hands and feet are secure at three points of contact before moving to the fourth point.
- ◆ Closely follow manufacturer's directions when using commercial tree stands.

Basic Survival Rules

If you remember to follow these simple rules, you will be prepared to survive.

- ◆ Remain calm in an emergency. Avoid panic. Stay put!
- ◆ Never travel or hunt alone.
- ◆ Tell someone where you will be hunting and when you should be returning.
- ◆ Know the weather conditions in the area you will be hunting.
- ◆ Dress for the weather....but be prepared for worse weather!
- ◆ Avoid hypothermia. Know how to treat it if it strikes!
- ◆ Carry a survival kit with you at all times.
- ◆ Know how to build a fire even when everything is wet. Carry the materials you will need.
- ◆ Carry a map and compass and know how to use them!

Be prepared to deal with the enemies of survival.



Remain Calm In Survival Situations

To survive you need only four things: A calm head, food, water and shelter. Don't panic! All of the food, water and shelter in the world cannot help you if you panic in a survival situation. Keep calm and use your head! Your brain is your best survival tool! You know what a 'stop' sign is. Here's what 'stop' means in a survival situation:

S.....Stop, when you realize you've got a problem. The first thing to do is admit to yourself that you are in trouble.

T.....Think, about what you need to do to survive.

O.....Observe, the area and look for shelter, fuel, etc.

P.....Plan, how you are going to use your survival kit and the other resources available to you. Don't wait until dark to plan!

Remain calm. Think clearly. Use the tools you have available to you.

Hunting Safety On The Water: Hunting Facts

Each year, more hunters die from drowning and the effects of hypothermia than from gunshot wounds. Most of the accident reports from waterborne hunting fatalities are not dramatic stories. The hunter didn't succumb in an "outdoor life and death" struggle with a twenty-foot gator or enrage a hippopotamus that attacked the boat. Rather, the accident reports usually read: "Fell out of boat reaching for a decoy and never resurfaced" or "Capsized boat while standing to take a look at passing ducks...struggled briefly in the cold water, then seemed to become paralyzed before help could arrive."

Keep in mind that many hunters do not regard themselves as "boaters" and as a consequence do not consider the special conditions and challenges of the marine environment. To ensure a safe hunting trip, make a point to **KNOW BEFORE YOU GO** about your boat, its equipment, the weather and yourself.

Your Safety Equipment

Personal Flotation Devices (PFD's) are essential to safe waterborne hunting. Statistics show that the great majority of capsizing and falls overboard occur with boats less than 20 feet in length.

Many hunters don't realize that a PFD is **REQUIRED** to be carried for each person aboard, the same as in other boat outings. It is strongly suggested that everyone wear one. Many special purpose Coast Guard approved PFDs are on the market today. Special vests for hunting and fishing are available.

Other items of safety equipment that are **ADVISABLE** to have onboard:

- ◆ Day and night visual distress signaling devices.
- ◆ Anchor with enough line to keep your boat from drifting.
- ◆ Oars or paddles as a supplemental form of propulsion.
- ◆ Water bailer (coffee can or scoop made from a bleach bottle).
- ◆ First aid kit.
- ◆ Extra foul weather clothing.
- ◆ Compass and charts of the area.
- ◆ Emergency tools and spare parts.



Your Boat

Be familiar with the characteristics of your boat. Most hunters use smaller, more easily transportable craft like johnboats, bassboats, or canoes. Some boat designs are not as stable as others. These types, because of their flat bottoms or narrow beams, are more prone to swamping or capsizing. How can you avoid an unplanned fall into the water?

- ◆ Never cross large bodies of water during rough weather.
- ◆ Stay with your boat if you capsize and can't get to shore.
- ◆ Avoid standing up or moving around in the boat. This includes your dog!
- ◆ Remain seated and be certain to store your equipment properly.
- ◆ **NEVER** move about your boat with a loaded gun or rifle.



Don't overload your boat with passengers or equipment. Know the carrying capacity of your boat; use the capacity plate attached to the inside hull as guidance.

Your Personal Limitations

As a boat owner, you have a personal responsibility to maintain physical preparedness while out on the water since the lives of others may be affected by your actions. Are you aware that many external factors can impair your mental alertness? **Some of these stress factors include:**

Fatigue: Hunting can be a physically demanding sport. Hours of sitting with exposure to wind, sun and glare can slow your reaction time. Don't overextend your endurance by staying out on the water longer than you should.

Hypothermia: Hypothermia occurs when the body is subjected to prolonged cold temperatures. The most common cause of hypothermia is exposure to cold water, though long exposure to cold air can cause it as well. Immersion in cold water is the leading killer of boating hunters. A person immersed in cold water can lose body heat 25 times faster than in air at the same temperature. Each person is affected by the cold differently. Dress appropriately for the environment you are in.

Hypothermia Signals include

◆ Shivering	◆ Numbness	◆ Weakness
◆ Confusion	◆ Drowsiness	◆ Dizziness
◆ Impaired judgment		◆ Impaired vision

Five Stages of Hypothermia

1. Shivering
2. Apathy
3. Loss of consciousness
4. Decreasing heart rate and breathing
5. Death

Activity such as treading water only quickens heat loss. While awaiting rescue, the best thing to do is assume a Heat Escape Lessening Position (H.E.L.P.) that should reduce your body's heat loss by 50%. By using this position you will reduce direct exposure to the water of those body parts where heat is lost at a greater rate, such as armpits, ribs, groin and head. Your position will have to be adjusted depending on the PFD and clothing being worn.

H.E.L.P. -- Heat Escape Lessening Postures



This position reduces exposure of high heat loss areas of the body. Wearing a PFD allows you to draw your knees to your chest and your arms to your sides,



Huddling with other people in the water lessens the loss of body heat and is good for morale.

Alcohol

Every sensible hunter knows that alcohol or drugs don't mix with guns and boating. Drugs or alcohol seriously impair judgment and coordination. You know your aim can be affected by them, but did you know that 50% of all reported boating fatalities are alcohol-related? Your hunting trip should be enjoyable and safe. You can ensure that it will be with prior planning and diligence while out on the water.

The Weather and Environment

The weather and surrounding water conditions are important factors to consider when setting out on a hunting trip. Most water-related hunting fatalities occur on smaller bodies of water late in the year, when water and air temperature are lower, and there is a greater frequency of storms. If the weather looks bad or if there is a forecast for upcoming storms, don't risk going out. If you do get caught in a squall, head for shore diagonally to the waves. Move passengers and equipment into the center of the boat to improve stability.

Hunters deliberately seek out less populated areas. In these locations, there is less opportunity for someone to find you in an emergency. It is wise to let someone know the general area you will be in by leaving them a float plan.

Fatality Summary as of November 08

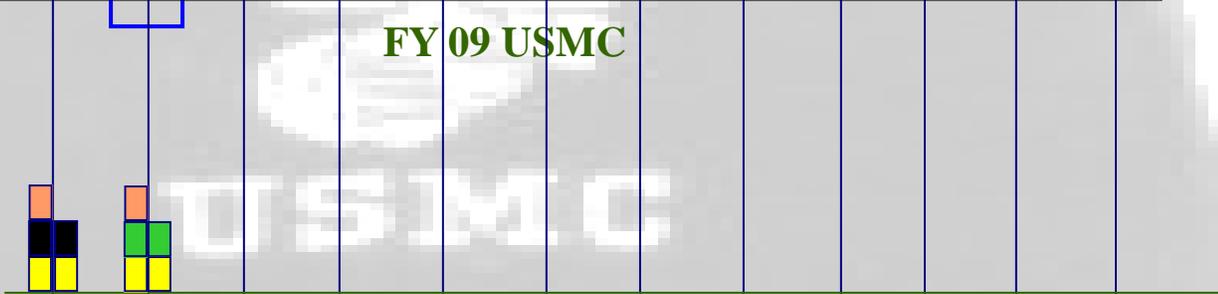


Month Oct **Nov** Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep

FY 09 USMC

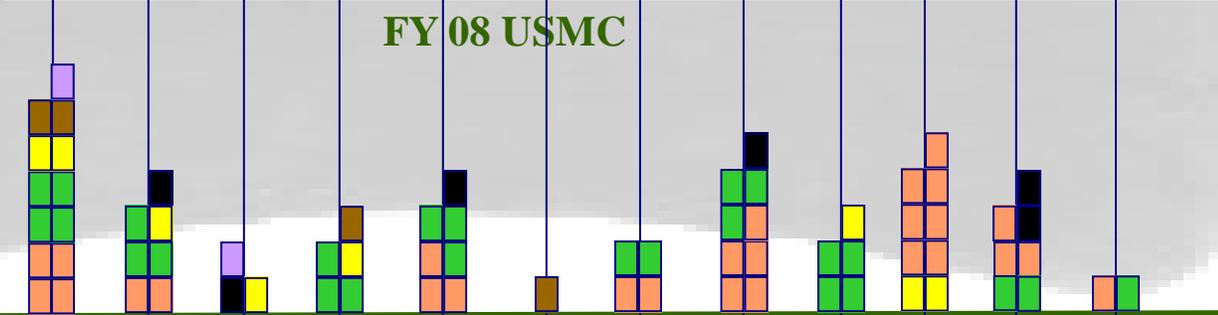
Total
Fatalities
FY09
10

Down from FY08



FY 08 USMC

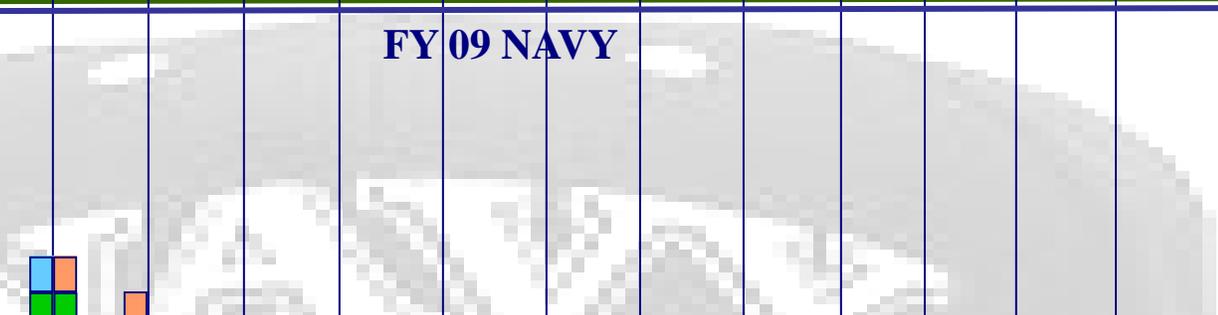
Total
Fatalities
FY08
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FY 09 NAVY

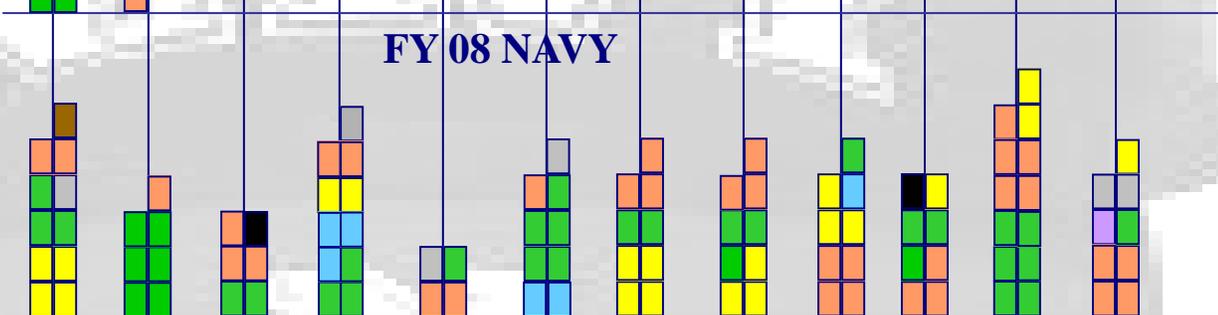
Total
Fatalities
FY09
5

Down from FY08



FY 08 NAVY

Total
Fatalities
FY08
105



PMV
GOV
Aviation
Motorcycle
Off Duty/Rec
Misc.
PT
Negligent Discharge
Training