



STATE SAFETY OFFICE
HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
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LATHAM, NEW YORK 12110



SAFETY MESSAGE 17-07

Outdoor Physical Training Safety

Spring is almost here, the clocks have sprung forward one hour, and the days are starting to get noticeably longer. The snow, ice, and cold have kept folks from enjoying outdoor activities. Walking, running, bicycle riding, and hiking are more enjoyable in the outdoors. Some safety considerations are noted in this message to prevent an accident or injury from occurring.

Walking and Running Outside

Pedestrian injuries while walking or running outside near roadways and crossing intersections can be disastrous. According to the Centers for Disease Control, in 2013 there were 4,735 pedestrian fatalities from traffic-related crashes. Most pedestrian deaths occur in urban areas, non-intersection locations, and at night.
(https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/pedestrian_safety/index.html)

If you are going to be running or walking near a roadway or an area with vehicular traffic, here are some steps you can take to make it back safely:

- wear reflective clothing during low-visibility times of day
- stay on sidewalks if available, or run facing traffic
- don't use headphones, or if you must, keep the volume low enough to enable you to hear oncoming traffic or emergency vehicles and use one earbud
- avoid known high-traffic areas
- let someone know where you plan on running and about how long you will be out

(<http://www.runnersworld.com/start-walking/11-tips-for-staying-safe-on-the-roads>)

Bicycle Safety

Another great way to enjoy the outdoors and improve your physical fitness is to start bicycling. The low-impact, aerobic benefits of riding a bike can be a great alternative to running. One of the keys to a safe ride is to make sure all the preventive maintenance has been performed:

- check condition of tires and amount of tread
- check tire air pressure
- inspect the brake system and test before hitting the road
- check the headlight and taillight to verify they are functional
- check for any loose bolts, worn chain, or cracks in the frame



These simple steps can prevent an accident from occurring. Observing the traffic rules when riding on public roadways and using proper hand-signals will let automobile operators know if you plan on turning or braking.

(https://www.dot.ny.gov/display/programs/bicycle/safety_laws/safety-tips)

Wearing comfortable, reflective clothing, the proper footwear, and a bicycle helmet will also make the ride more enjoyable and safer. Helmet use has been estimated to reduce the odds of head injury by 50 percent, and the odds of head, face, or neck injury by 33 percent. (<http://www.bhsi.org/stats.htm>)

Hiking Safety

Hiking can be a physical fitness activity that you can enjoy with the whole family, or a group of friends from your unit. It not only provides physical activity, but can also be a very relaxing way to relieve stress. In order to make your hiking adventure as safe and enjoyable as possible, here are some tips:

- plan your hike, and let others know your plan
- do not hike alone, bring a buddy (or buddies)
- pack for the unexpected, the weather may change during the hike
- wear the proper clothing and footwear
- be cautious about wildlife

For more information on Off-Duty Safety, visit:

<https://safety.army.mil/MEDIA/SeasonalSafetyCampaigns/SpringSummer2017.aspx>

To find previously published Safety Messages go to our NYARNG Safety Website:

<http://dmna.ny.gov/safety/>

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