



## **U. S. MARINE CORPS FORCES COMMAND 2015 Holiday Season Safety Message**

The holiday season is a joyous and festive time that we look forward to spending with family and friends. Preparing for the holidays can be both demanding and stressful. Successfully juggling the various tasks associated with the holidays requires detailed planning to minimize potential stress. Detailed preparation and early identification of potential hazards are critical components to ensuring a safe holiday season.

I challenge all leaders, especially peer leaders, to continue your personal commitment to the safety and welfare of your fellow Marines and Sailors. Your engaged leadership is a pivotal factor in preserving our force. Discuss in detail the concepts embodied in the “Protect What You’ve Earned” Campaign. Identify the dangers involved in excessive alcohol consumption, and both the personal losses and the detrimental impact it can have on our ability to maintain our corps values of honor, courage and commitment. Displaying responsible behavior, making smart decisions, and employing effective risk management are traits demanded of every Marine and Sailor, and we will accept no compromise.

Roadway travel remains one of the greatest hazards our Marines, Sailors and civilian Marines will face this holiday season. The potential for wintry road conditions, coupled with an increase in highway traffic, demand an alert and defensive posture while behind the wheel. Drivers must identify hazards and take appropriate and timely actions to mitigate risks. Promote thorough vehicle inspections at every level in all commands and ensure all hands maintain emergency kits. Emphasize vigilance in adhering to both posted and weather-induced speed limits, wearing seatbelts, and avoiding distractions while driving. Emphasize the need for sufficient rest prior to any long-distance travel and the need for frequent breaks to deter fatigue.

Each season of the year offers new challenges and hazards requiring new mitigation strategies. Encourage your Marines and Sailors to think, act, and stay safe by making them aware of common holiday season home hazards including hanging lights and decorations, electrical hazards, burning candles, and using deep fat fryers. Additionally, excessive alcohol consumption invites and exacerbates already existent dangers. Whether hosting or simply attending holiday parties, ensure guests drink responsibly and have a fool-proof plan to get home safely.

Finally, take a moment this holiday season to remember our deployed forces, some of whom may be in harm’s way. The best way to honor their service and sacrifice is to ensure we return safely from the holiday break, ready to take our place in their ranks. On behalf of the MARFORCOM staff, I wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday season. Be safe and remain Semper Fidelis.

Semper Fidelis,  
Lieutenant General John E. Wissler  
Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command