



SAFETY TIPS 2023 LABOR DAY WEEKEND

Labor Day is observed the first Monday in September (4th). Labor Day weekend officially ends the “101 Days of Summer” campaign, though fall does not officially begin until 23 September. This upcoming holiday weekend generally finds people traveling to visit family and friends, engaging in back yard barbeques and pool parties, and participating in other water related events. The following ‘Safety Tips’ are offered to highlight common Labor Day weekend hazards, and upcoming seasonal changes to enhance your safety:



MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY: Labor Day is one of the most traveled holidays of the year. Begin all travel well-rested. If traveling long distances, inspect your vehicle. Leadership can use “TRiPS” <https://trips.safety.army.mil/marines/Home> to assist Marines with performing a risk assessment before travelling out of the area. Avoid common motor vehicle mishap causal factors: Driving Distracted, Intoxicated or Fatigued, Speeding, not Wearing a Seatbelt/PPE. Vehicle operators are urged to ‘Look Twice for Motorcycles’. If riding a motorcycle, ensure rider training is up to date. Riders, watch for and anticipate vehicles pulling out in front of you. Wear all required PPE and make yourselves visible. Know your limits. Maintain safe following distances.

Position yourselves to be most visible to other motorists. Ride with a Battle Buddy, and ride responsibly!

RECREATION SAFETY: Never swim alone or impaired. According to the CDC, an average of 3,500 people die annually due to drownings. Know the signs and escape procedures of riptides - before entering the water. Swim at locations with lifeguards. Avoid mixing alcohol with water-related activities. Wear a floatation device when boating, jet-skiing, or kayaking. If bicycling, wear a helmet and never ride while wearing headphones or ear buds. Wear bright colored clothing to enhance your visibility to others. Use proper hand signals to alert traffic of your intentions. Wear hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Keep hydrated and have fun!



GRILLING SAFETY: Labor Day weekend grilling allows us to put our dazzling grill works to the test, but we must do so safely! Always clean and inspect grills prior to use. Keep grills away from flammable materials. Prevent kids and pets from coming in contact with hot grills. Ensure fingers are well clear prior to opening or closing grill lids. Use long-handled utensils to prevent burns to hands and arms. Never leave grills unattended. Keep a water bottle near to extinguish fires. Avoid leaning over a grill. Cook food thoroughly and refrigerate left-overs promptly to prevent spoiling. Secure gas valve when done and stow grill when cooled.



DID YOU KNOW: Labor Day’s roots can be traced back to the streets of 1880s New York City, where rival union leaders joined forces to protest unfair labor practices that plagued industry at the time. Since the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Act was enacted in 1970, more than 627,000 workers’ lives have been saved.

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SEASONAL CHANGES: While it may be warm now, cooler temperatures are near. Be aware of seasonal changes and weather outlook in your area. Plan appropriately to alleviate driving in inclement conditions. Keep vehicle wiper blades in optimum conditions, and windshield washer fluid reservoir full. If traveling in northern states, ensure vehicle is equipped with an emergency kit (water, blankets, non-perishable foods, flashlight, shovel, sand/kitty litter (for traction), warm clothes, blankets, and phone/charger). Remain aware that we are still at the height of Hurricane Season, which runs until the end of November. Stay prepared, stay alert, stay safe!

LABOR DAY WEEKEND MISHAPS: The following MARFORCOM mishaps occurred over the last few Labor Day weekends. Consider what could be done to mitigate these mishaps:

- LCpl and 4 other Marines were cleaning personal firearms when the LCpl was struck in the head from a negligent discharge from one of the other Marines' weapons. LCpl rushed to hospital and recovered.
- Cpl found unconscious with severe head injury and blood coming out of one ear. Alcohol was involved.
- Cpl seriously injured after jumping from a moving ATV that was traveling 50 mph down a mountain and struck a tree. Cpl suffered numerous serious injuries.
- LCpl found heavily intoxicated from alcohol, incoherent and in septic shock. Spent 6 days in hospital.
- Cpl assumed pistol was unloaded, fired round into upper thigh. Taken to hospital for treatment.
- Sgt involved in a dirt bike crash and suffered a fractured pelvis.
- Major tilling home garden, lost footing, and right foot contacted tiller blades. Major received severe lacerations on foot and calf.

ALCOHOL AWARENESS: Many of the past Labor Day weekend mishaps involved excessive alcohol consumption. If you plan to drink, do so responsibly. Never handle a weapon or attempt to operate a vehicle if you've been drinking. Consider the ramifications of a DUI or injuring someone - before getting behind the wheel. Do not succumb to peer pressure by engaging in drinking games or "doing shots". Designate a safe, sober driver before going out drinking. Do not ride with someone if they've been drinking. Monitor fellow Marines alcohol intake and step in before tragedy strikes.



RISK MANAGEMENT (RM): Every Marine is responsible for breaking the chain of events that leads to a mishap. Incorporate 'In-Depth' or 'Deliberate' planning into Labor Day weekend plans and apply RM process to all activities. Exercise discipline in avoiding needless risks and their consequences. Use the 'Battle Buddy' system when engaging in outdoor activities. Make smart decisions and continue to watch out for one another.



DID YOU KNOW (2): In the United States, around 800 hot dogs are consumed every second between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Bon Appétit!

RESOURCES:

- NHTSA Vehicle Recall: <http://www.checktoprotect.org/>
- National Safety Council: <https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/motor-vehicle/holidays/labor-day/>
- NHTSA Safe Driving Campaign: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/campaign/drive-sober-or-get-pulled-over>
- DefensiveDriving.org: <https://www.defensivedriving.org/>
- FDA Food Safety: <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/protect-food-and-water-during-hurricanes-and-other-storms#before>
- Ready.Gov: <https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes#during>
- WBGT Flag Conditions: <https://www.ready.marines.mil/Stay-Informed/Natural-Hazards/Extreme-Heat/Flag-Conditions/>

Manage the Risk



Protect the Force