

# THE SENTINEL



OFFICIAL SAFETY NEWSLETTER OF CIVIL AIR PATROL

## Safety Alerts by National Safety Team

A process has been put into place to ensure high risk items are communicated in a must share format called a Safety Alert. These will be generated to protect life, limb, and assets. This is to protect our members, the equipment and aircraft members own, and CAP assets. These are published on the National CAP website, added to the RSS feed on eServices, and distributed to all senior CAP leadership for distribution to members of CAP. Additionally notification will be posted on Facebook and Twitter to advise members to refer to the National CAP website and connect with their leadership. Social networking tools DO NOT replace member responsibility to communicate within our organization. These alerts should be distributed in mass communications through methods established within your units such as group email or Flight Crew Information Files (FCIF). If you have not seen these, please refer to the National CAP website under Members, Safety, Safety Alerts.

[http://www.capmembers.com/safety/safety\\_alerts.cfm](http://www.capmembers.com/safety/safety_alerts.cfm)

If you are unclear on your process of communications and how to receive these, please consult with your safety officer or appropriate commander to help identify how you can get connected.

## Avoid the Whack-a-Mole Safety Management Program

by Al Matson, Minnesota Wing DOV, Professional Airline Pilot Instructor

### Reactive Safety Management

What is the Whack-a-Mole Safety Management Program? It is the program of managing safety issues by pounding on the pilot when a safety issue pops up. Many of us have observed this system in practice. A pilot makes an error of some sort, either causing some amount of damage or nearly doing so, and then is punished (whacked) to keep him or her from making that mistake again. The theory here is that by whacking this pilot, the other pilots will see the potential for being whacked and therefore remain in their holes (not make errors). The problem is that, as can be observed in the game of Whack-a-Mole, the other moles just keep popping

 CAP Safety Team	<b>Col Robert Diduch</b> CAP/SE <a href="mailto:BobDKateB@aol.com">BobDKateB@aol.com</a>	<b>Col Charles Greenwood</b> GLR/SE <a href="mailto:cgreenwo@bsu.edu">cgreenwo@bsu.edu</a>	<b>Lt Col David Plum</b> NCR/SE <a href="mailto:savdoc@centurytel.netf">savdoc@centurytel.netf</a>	<b>Maj Bill Woody</b> SER/SE <a href="mailto:wawoody@att.net">wawoody@att.net</a>
	<b>Col Robert Alex</b> Asst CAP/SE <a href="mailto:ralex@cfl.rr.com">ralex@cfl.rr.com</a>	<b>Col Charles Glass</b> MER/SE <a href="mailto:csglass@juno.com">csglass@juno.com</a>	<b>Lt Col Paul Mondoux</b> NER/SE <a href="mailto:paul@nhplm.org">paul@nhplm.org</a>	<b>Maj Alex Kay</b> PCR/SE <a href="mailto:bcat417@aol.com">bcat417@aol.com</a>
	<b>Lt Col Bruce Brown</b> Asst CAP/SE <a href="mailto:bbrown@cap.gov">bbrown@cap.gov</a>	<b>Lt Col Melanie Ann Capehart</b> SWR/SE <a href="mailto:MelanieCapehart@peoplepc.com">MelanieCapehart@peoplepc.com</a>	<b>Lt Col Donald Johanson</b> RMR/SE <a href="mailto:johansondon@msn.com">johansondon@msn.com</a>	<b>Mr. Frank Jirik</b> Chief of Safety NHQ CAP <a href="mailto:fjirik@capnhq.gov">fjirik@capnhq.gov</a>

out of the holes (pilot errors keep being made). This reactive style of management never addresses the reasons of why mistakes are made.



Reactive “Safety Managers” shown hard at work whacking problem pilots.

### **Manage the Problem, Not the Symptoms**

To error is human, and while some pilots may think they are super-human, the fact remains that they will make mistakes. The job of a safety manager is to dig down and find out why a particular type of error keeps “popping up” and then find ways to eliminate the chance of the error occurring again, reduce its likelihood of reoccurrence, or at least reduce the impact of the error if it does surface again. It is a rare occurrence that a pilot willfully causes a problem, so remedial education is normally what is called for rather than punishment. Unless the pilot intended to create a problem, then “whacking” the pilot completely misses the mark because that is simply addressing the symptom and fails to address the real problems.

### **Identify All Contributing Issues**

The Whack-a-Mole Safety Management program usually comes into play when you have management that is simply overloaded with other tasks, and doesn’t take the time to look for the chain of errors that lead to the undesired end-state (a bent tail ring for example). Simply punishing this pilot for the bent ring may seem like the most logical and expeditious way to deal with the problem, but that is just “Whack-a-Mole” in action. It won’t prevent anything, except perhaps further reporting of bent tail rings by that pilot (and all of his friends).

If the beleaguered safety manager were to look into how the tail ring came to be bent in the first place, he or she might identify common threads with other bent rings and perhaps identify a method for preventing further occurrences of this problem. Stopping the error chain at any point could

prevent a reoccurrence of the issue. This would be managing the problem, rather than the symptoms. This method is far more effective in preventing future problems, and that is the goal of a safety program.

### **Patience is a Virtue**

While “Whack-a-Mole” may make some people feel like they “did something,” it is simply not effective in the long run. It fails to identify the real issues or to address them with solutions. While identifying and dealing with all of the issues surrounding an adverse event takes more time, and requires a good deal of patience, it is the best way to manage safety.

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## **Avoiding Car Fires Due To Phone Use**

by Lt Col Harold Coghlan, Alabama Wing Director of Safety

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**Warning:** Not all vehicles’ outlets are “live” when the ignition is off, but some ARE, so this design feature may cause a fire, if you leave a device plugged into a power outlet or cigarette plug, and turn the ignition OFF. If yours stays ON it can be REALLY scary. This fire actually happened to a van. The van was not drivable afterwards. This is the driver’s story.

“As some of you may know, we had a pretty scary incident recently. We are all okay but I wanted to warn everyone not to make the same mistake I did. This fire resulted from leaving an iPhone charger/docking station plugged into the car outlet. It overheated and started a fire, while parked in our garage. PLEASE unplug anything you have in your car outlets once you turn off your car!

We were VERY fortunate that we found the fire, at 11pm, before going to bed and before it spread to the house. None of our garage heat detectors or house fire alarms went off (another item to take care of on my “to do” list).”

We have all probably experienced at one time or another, an urge to talk on our cell phones while driving. We should be aware that there are enough accident statistics while performing this maneuver that several states have outlawed the use of cell phones while driving. Of course some of you have “hands free sets”, but for the rest of us, it behooves us to try to be safer and if we must talk, consider pulling off the interstate and then place that call. We want you to make it safely to wherever you are driving.

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## **Civil Air Patrol Safety, Facebook, Twitter, Really It’s True!**

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National Headquarters, the Safety Office, has gone on-line with a Facebook page and a link to Twitter. You can find us on Facebook under Civil Air Patrol Safety – U.S. Air Force Auxiliary and on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/CAPSafe](http://www.twitter.com/CAPSafe).

In an attempt to bring our members safety information will periodically be posted to Facebook and Twitter to let you know where and when to look. These notices will typically point you back the National CAP website, [www.gocivilairpatrol.com](http://www.gocivilairpatrol.com), but it’s important stay connected.

Amidst a changing culture of Safety within CAP it is important to recognize what we are doing right and give recognition to good decisions. We can learn from our successes. Here are a couple of examples:

1. In North Carolina during a Wing SAREX, a flight crew operating a C172 aircraft departed their mission base to complete their assigned mission. After flying Sortie #1 they landed at an offsite airport for refueling. The aircraft was refueled and the crew started their pre-departure checklist. While performing a magneto check on this aircraft one magneto did not function correctly and the crew could not get it to burn off. Sortie #2 was canceled and ground transportation was arranged for the crew. The aircraft was grounded and left for repair at an onsite maintenance facility.

Good Decisions were, but not limited to: a. The crew observed proper fuel management and planned their mission with a required fuel stop observing fuel requirements of CAP regulations and FARs. b. Mission safety was observed and the mission crew and incident command made a good decision under mission pressures to abort the mission in light of an aircraft that did not meet safe flight requirements. c. The aircraft was grounded (red card) and scheduled for maintenance before being returned to a mission capable status.

2. In New Jersey a senior member driving a van of cadets was rushed by a herd of four deer. One deer ran in front of the van, 2 behind, and one challenged the vehicle by impacting the driver side door.

Good Decisions were, but not limited to: a. The driver remained calm and as an experienced driver avoided collision with the deer in front of the vehicle. b. The vehicle was driving in a heavily wooded area, but the vehicle was drivable to a safe place where the police were notified of the incident. c. There were ZERO injuries to passengers. d. Speed of the vehicle was appropriate to the driving location giving time to safely react.

These are just a couple of examples of good decisions of potentially disastrous situations. In the philosophy of Safety, for catastrophic event, i.e. major accident, often with a fatality, there are 600 near-miss events that occurred before this event. Are we on borrowed time? Please share your near-miss experiences and focus on the positive. Thank you to the judgment and skill of the CAP members in these scenarios. While some may say routine, that is what safety is about, making routine decisions based on education, awareness, and training to avoid catastrophic outcomes. Good Job.

Submit your stories and experiences to [safety@capnhq.gov](mailto:safety@capnhq.gov). You have a guarantee your information will only be used to learn from.

The following are real life events and mishaps that are based on true stories. Names of members and other identifying information have been removed and resemblances of these events that may have occurred in a CAP unit near you are likely coincidence. Do you think? You have asked for this, here it is. Please be positive and learn from each other. These are events you may not want to repeat.

- After successful completion of a flight a C172 sustained damage to the plastic end cap on the aircraft's left elevator. The pilot lost control of the aircraft when pushing into a hangar alone while not observing established practices for parking in the home base hangar. An aircraft mover was available for use.
- While airborne, a flight crew smelled smoke in the cockpit. A precautionary landing was executed safely.
- While parked in a hangar near a golf cart, an aircraft was struck by the golf cart when a ladder was loaded into the cart and struck the accelerator pedal driving the cart into the aircraft resulting in main fuselage damage.
- While positioning an aircraft into a hangar with one pilot operating the towbar and steering and the other pilot on a wing strut, the aircraft entered the hangar at a slight angle resulting in an aileron hitting the hangar door resulting in a bent static tab and dent on the aileron. The investigation revealed there was unnecessary chatter around the aircraft during movement from other personnel in the area as the aircraft was just entering the hangar, resulting in distraction.
- While roasting hot dogs over an open flame in a fire drum, a member backed into the drum that resulted in a leg burn.
- A member nearly passed out due to possible dehydration during an outdoor SAREX field training event.
- While participating in Direction Finding (DF) training in the field, a member tripped on a tree root and fell on his knee. Additionally there was a pre-existing condition that was not identified prior to the event.
- While standing in formation at the position of attention, an active member passed out. *(NHQ note: A review of injuries demonstrates this to be a frequent occurrence. All personnel please be aware of this and discuss during all formations as a part of your culture. This deserves a constant reminder in all training formations for cadets and senior members.)*
- A cadet jumped over a shrub, unable to see the other side, and collided with a parked car.
- Vehicle moving on a public highway was struck by a wild turkey.

- Van found with broken glass inside it. There were no broken windows. Glass was left from a previous operator. There were other dents in the vehicle; perhaps unrelated to this event, but the use of ground guides was re-emphasized while backing vehicles in parking areas or when maneuvering vehicles in confined areas.
- While backing out of a parking spot in a POV, a member backed into a CAP vehicle.

## Hear Our Thoughts, Hear Our Experience by Members of the Civil Air Patrol Nationwide

Attached in the pages to follow are some of the words of wisdom often overlooked in our daily lives. Complacency can slide into our world in simple ways that we miss in the hustle and bustle of daily life. Simple, keep it simple. Too much information can be a distraction too and safety should be a habit we do, not something we just talk about. Here are the words of wisdom that came direct from those that stand shoulder to shoulder with us in our family of Civil Air Patrol. These are from CAP's Safety Suggestion database, keep 'em flowing, these are brilliant. They all couldn't be published, and to some, direct responses are being made as needed to ensure compliance to regulations. Thank you for your submissions. Please review the January 2010 Sentinel if you need directions to enter your submission.

Derek J Larkins	NV-069	January 2010	Kids under the age of 13 should not be allowed to walk the street without an adult by their side unless on a military base.
April Greer	Jerome UT-048	January 2010	Wear good shoes for drill to protect feet.
David J Stone	WI-183	January 2010	It's a good idea to store unused Charcoal for your grill in a small metal garbage can (with a lid) in your garage instead of leaving it in the bag. This is because damp charcoal can lead to spontaneous combustion.
Barbara McGillem	M IN-123	January 2010	Never stand on a chair.
Ryan Dickerson	D OH-003	January 2010	I am a deer hunter. I have a crossbow and a shotgun. I can say one thing and be 100% sure that I am right; I am not the only one in CAP that hunts. When I do go hunting, I practice gun safety. I took a test on gun safety to get my hunting license and I live gun safety. I have a story of the first time I went deer hunting. It was youth gun season in my state of Ohio, and I went into the woods with my dad. We saw two does walk out in front of us and I took a good, clean shoot. I had my safety on. Most hunters would consider that a bad thing and I did too at first, but now I look back at that and remember that I had my safety on and I might have stopped something bad from happening. So next time you go into the woods, practice gun safety.
Jason Clevenger	L PA-125	January 2010	Keep a shovel in the CAP vehicles at all times in case you get stuck in snow or mud.

Duane B Filkins	KS-061	January 2010	Remember the acronym "COLD" during inclement or winter weather. Garments must be CLEAN, avoid OVERHEATING, sweating will kill you. Dress in LAYERS so you can adjust your temperature and most importantly, remain DRY. Keep your hands, feet and head protected. Where sunglasses to protect your eyes.
Leonard LaMantia Jr	P PA-125	January 2010	Winter Driving Safety Tips; a) Decrease your speed and increase the space between you and the vehicle ahead. b) Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels lock up, ease off the brake. c) If you start to slide, turn into the slide. d) Keep your lights and windshield clean. e) Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to other motorists. f) Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads.
Patricia A Kidd-Jordan	IN-123	January 2010	Capt. Patricia Kidd-Jordan Weir Cook Squadron GLR-IN-123 Member 396446 EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY PLAN EARTHQUAKE BUILDING PROCEDURE A. IN THE CLASSROOM At the first feeling of a tremor, teachers/staff should instruct students/cadets to: 1. Immediately take cover under desks or tables. 2. Turn their bodies away from windows. 3. Remain in sheltered position until instructed otherwise. 4. Remain silent and listen for instructions.
Cory B Collier	TX-388	January 2010	Have cadets wear yellow reflective PT Belts when doing PT @ night.
Russell Davis	Mark OK-074	January 2010	FAA Flight Following or FAA Flight Plans as relates to Flight Plans. All CAP Flights are conducted using a Flight Release from a Flight Release Officer. Suggest that the secondary contact given to the FAA be the Flight Release Officer and his/her contact information. That way, should a CAP Pilot fail to close his/her flight plan for any reason, CAP is immediately notified of the overdue condition. Likewise, if the FRO has been contacted and the FAA has not, the FRO would be able to state that the pilot has arrived safely. By using the FRO as the contact, it provides better integration of flight release and flight plan procedures.
Patrick T Kon	PA-328	January 2010	Don't fall short of a safe day--Beware of icy floors and slippery sidewalks
Harold Coghlan	A AL-001	January 2010	I would suggest that CAP Vans and vehicles use color coded tire pressure "caps" that are designed to give a color code (Green) when they are "at" the desired PSI air pressure, as well a a Yellow when too high a PSI, and a Red color when the tire PSI is too low. These color coded tire caps can be purchased from most specialty auto stores, or on-line, and cost about 10 dollars for a pack of 4 caps (for one complete vehicle). The tire caps come in a specific tire rating, for example 36 PSI, or 40 PSI. It would be a very small cost, yet it would make "pre-fighting" the vans and other vehicles very easy to do and even better, spot when a tire is low. We tested it in Alabama and they work.
John F Clark	NV-001	January 2010	It is a good idea to always have some clothes, shoes and a flashlight EXACTLY where you know where they are when you go to bed. In the event you have to arise and go outdoors for ANY reason you should minimize the time it takes to be fully clothed.
Paul A Miller	LA-089	January 2010	Hanger rash can be eased by marking the cement or ground leading into the hanger. After landing, some part of the team has to slow all members down and focus before going into a tight hanger. All want to go home, but fast is not always the best.

Joseph Schreckengost	R PA-125	January 2010	Always be sure to use the buddy system when going anywhere on a cap activity away from the "group"
John Schreckengost	A PA-125	January 2010	In this area that I live (North East United States) we are under several inches of snow at this time. So my safety suggestion is to be very careful and take your time when shoveling snow. Because if you are not in good shape physically, you may have a heart attack.
Charles Jackson	P WA-049	January 2010	For Cadet & Composite Squadrons: After a meeting is over, cadets should not be left standing alone outdoors in the dark, waiting for their parents to pick them up. At least two senior members should remain until all cadets are safely on their way home.
John McCollum Jr	D NC-001	January 2010	In a recent two week period in North Carolina, three children and one parent were killed in two separate wrecks at railroad crossings. In both cases, the railroad crossing arms and signals functioned properly. Anytime you are approaching a railroad crossing, whether it is signaled and guarded or not, follow the old rules of stop-look-listen. Stop or slow down as you approach the crossing. Look both ways down the track to see if a train is coming. Turn down the radio, hang up the phone, and listen for the train whistle. Never go around a closed gate. Don't try to get across the tracks before the train gets there. Using a little common sense could have avoided these tragedies. Don't be a statistic. Dan McCollum, Maj CAP NC Wing Safety Officer
Robert McGillem	L IN-123	January 2010	Headlights should be cleaned periodically to remove road grime and salt buildup during the winter or anytime after driving on wet roads...
Donald R Bolles	CO-148	January 2010	At any formation, be alert to those members standing at attention or parade rest very rigidly; they may pass-out for lack of blood flow. Facial injuries can be serious. If you anticipate an extended formation time, break it up with activity that requires members to flex their leg muscles.
Matthew Bailey	E TN-004	January 2010	Plug in vehicle block heaters, maintain fluid levels and QUALITY (test antifreeze, etc), perform proper battery maintenance, and install block heaters in vehicles parked outside in states that see sub-freezing temperatures more than 7 days out of the year. These ensure vehicle mission readiness and prevent our members from being stranded and exposed to unsafe conditions such as traffic and freezing temperatures.
John Wigginton III	C LA-093	January 2010	With the cold weather here now there is an increase of pulled or strained muscles. The majority of these happen at home. Before starting yard work, outside housework you should spend 10-15 minutes doing light stretching and bending exercises and this will increase flexibility thus reducing injuries. This should also be done before physical training exercises with the cadets, as well as before ground team task and training.
Kevin Barstow Sr	L NJ-009	January 2010	For those units who operate in or near marinas to search for ELTs, it is advisable to go to your local U.S. Coast Guard Unit to check on any old life vests they are going to be rid of, or purchase a couple for your unit. Marina docks get slippery and the chances of falling into the water are greater in that environment, especially in winter. An old life vest is better than none if you fall into the water. Watch for tied down lines and shore connections, especially at night. Kevin Barstow, CC/NER-NJ-009
Arlinda C Bailey	TN-128	January 2010	In below freezing temps, if it looks like water, it isn't!

## **Last Call**

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This is your last reminder to submit for your Mishap Free Certificates through your wing safety officers. March 15th, 2010 is the cut-off. There will be no submissions accepted after the cut-off date. Please forward your requests to [safety@capnhq.gov](mailto:safety@capnhq.gov).

## **Until Next Month** by YOU.

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Discover, report, stop, share, listen, learn. The things we have read about in this issue have already happened so you aren't allowed to experience these for yourself. Remember to "Knock it Off" and slow down. Have a good month.