



South Dakota Army National Guard



Safety Sense



Octobers fire safe message



Smoke detectors are your silent sentinels, remaining vigilant, watching over your family while you sleep. And they will be there, provided you do your part.

October has traditionally been set aside as fire prevention month. Whether because of MRS O'Leary's cow starting the Great Chicago Fire or the Peshtigo WI fire, both occurring on 8 Oct 1871, the National Fire Prevention Assn (NFPA) set this month to remind each of us to ensure our work and home environments are as fire safe as we can make them and to make sure we practice what to do in case of a fire.

If you haven't taken a look around you lately, it is high time you did. Look for those overloaded circuits and power strips. Clean the clutter up in the garage. Pull the dryer vent hose off and clean or replace it. Store paints, flammables and cleaning supplies appropriately.

You need to get your kids involved as well. Have them draw a map of the house that shows at least 2 exits from each room. Include rendezvous locations. Then practice this plan until everyone

knows their part. Make sure each person understands to crawl low in the presence of smoke. Rehearse the plan at night with no lights on. Remember, every year across our nation, hundreds of family members die in a home fire, many just inches away from safety. They didn't have a plan, they didn't rehearse the plan or they didn't get under the hazards of the smoke.

Many die in home fires as a result of not having a working smoke detector. By today's construction standards, smoke detectors have to be hard wired in a system, with a battery backup. The system is designed that if one activates, all will sound. There must be one on all levels, outside of sleeping quarters, in each bedroom and near laundry rooms and kitchens (high hazard areas).

Check each to ensure that they activate and be sure that if the alarms sound, that it wakes your children. It was dis-

covered recently that many children will sleep through the high pitched sounds an alarm will make. The answer may be a smart alarm, one that permits a parent to prerecord a statement for the child to wake, that there is an emergency and to get out following the plan you have devised.

Practice your fire drills at home. Remind your children to feel a door with the back side of their hand before they open it to make sure they are not entering a fire or smoke/heat filled room.

Grandparents who have frequent overnight visitors need to put these skills to work as well. Fire safety in the home and at work is a year round activity. We all must remember to practice and prepare so that in the event of an emergency, panic and fear will be secondary to our instinct through training.

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Ready or not, winter is coming



Being prepared is the key to surviving if broke down or stranded on the road.

Days are getting shorter, evenings are becoming somewhat cooler and all the tourist are leaving. Officially we are in the Fall season, but winter weather can happen at any time.

That means your winter survival mentality needs to begin, once again. Many people do not change their habits from winter to summer, but if you've ever been stopped by a blizzard, stuck in a snow drift or otherwise disabled on the road, you know that having some basic supplies is a must.

Your winter survival kit should include the following:

- Ice scraper with brush/broom
- Shovel
- Flashlight/extra batteries
- Battery powered radio
- Water
- Snack foods: jerky, energy bars, raisins, candy bars
- Matches (strike anywhere, water proof)
- Candles
- Stocking caps, gloves, extra socks
- First Aid Kit
- Pocket knife
- Blanket/sleeping bag
- Tow chain/rope
- Road salt, sand or cat litter

- Jumper cables
- E Flares/reflectors
- Fluorescent flag/surveyors tape
- Whistle
- Cell phone charger (adaptable to vehicle)
- Deck of cards

Some other tips and suggestions while traveling in winter conditions:

- Keep the fuel tank above one half.
- Tell someone where you are going, the route you are taking and an anticipated arrival time. Then check in with that person.
- Keep your kit in the passenger compartment of the car.
- If you take prescription medications, bring extra (a couple days worth).
- If you become stuck, call 9-1-1 and advise them of the situation, where you are and the condition of everyone with you. Wait for instructions and guidance from the operator.
- Unless absolutely neces-

sary or instructed to, do not leave your car. If you do, write a note including name, contact info and destination. Then leave it on the dash.

- Tie a bright colored flag to your antenna.
- Do not run your vehicle for heat continuously. Starting your vehicle for a brief period of time every hour or so will maintain adequate heat and save fuel for extended periods.
- Conserve your cell phone battery as much as possible.
- Remain calm and wait for help to arrive.

All too often, when help does not appear readily available, people will try to venture out to find help. Unfortunately, several have become the victims of the elements and succumb to exposure.

If you stay where you are, and follow the basic steps outlined, your chances of survival are extremely good. Being prepared is the key.



HERE IT COMES

Are you ready to pull the trigger?

- Always point the muzzle in a safe direction.
- Never point a firearm or bow at anything you do not intend to shoot.
- Always keep the safety on until you are ready to fire; however, the safety should never be a substitute for safe firearm handling.

READY ... OR NOT?

Ready ... or Not is a call to action for leaders, Soldiers, Army Civilians and Family members to assess their "readiness" for what lies ahead—the known as well as the unknown.

Throughout our professional and personal lives, events happen all around us. We are often able to shape the outcome of those events, but many times we're not. Navigating life's challenges is all about decision-making.

So are **YOU** ready ... or not?



ARMY STRONG



<https://safety.army.mil>