



STATE SAFETY OFFICE
HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
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SAFETY MESSAGE 17-05

ALARACT 104/2016 -COLD WEATHER INJURY PREVENTION FOR 2016 – 2017 COLD WEATHER SEASON

Excerpts from the ALARACT are copied below, the entire ALARACT is available at <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/docs/DOC-332988> and at the NYARNG Safety Office website https://dmna.ny.gov/safety/message/NYNG_safety-1705-ALARACT_104_2016_Cold_Weather_Injury_Prevention.pdf

2. SITUATION. COLD WEATHER-RELATED INJURIES (CWI) REMAIN A SIGNIFICANT THREAT TO INDIVIDUAL HEALTH AND UNIT PERFORMANCE DURING TRAINING AND OPERATIONS. **DURING THE 2015 - 2016 COLD WEATHER SEASON, THERE WERE 31 CWI REPORTED AMONG SOLDIERS, INCLUDING 21 CASES OF FROSTBITE, 2 CASES OF IMMERSION FOOT AND 8 CASES OF HYPOTHERMIA, EACH POTENTIALLY LIFE OR LIMB THREATENING CONDITION.**

3. MISSION. COMMANDERS, SUPERVISORS, AND SERVICE MEMBERS (SM) AT ALL LEVELS WILL IMPLEMENT PROTECTIVE MEASURES AND UTILIZE PRINCIPLES OF RISK MANGEMENT TO PREVENT CWI TO SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS DURING 2016-2017 COLD WEATHER SEASON, NOW THROUGH 31 MAY 17 (REFERENCES A (PARA 2-29) AND E (PARA 2-4)).

4.A.1. USA **COMMANDERS AND LEADERS WILL ENSURE ALL PERSONNEL ARE EDUCATED ABOUT THE PREVENTION, RECOGNITION AND TREATMENT OF CWI.**

4.A.2. CWI AND OTHER INJURIES RELATED TO COLD WEATHER INCLUDE:

4.A.2.A. INJURIES DUE TO DECREASED TEMPERATURE (**HYPOTHERMIA, FROSTBITE, NONFREEZING COLD INJURY**).

4.A.2.B. INJURIES DUE TO USING HEATERS, ENGINES, AND STOVES (**E.G., BURNS FROM FIRE, CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING, ETC.**).

4.A.2.C. ACCIDENTS (I.E. **SLIPS, TRIPS, FALLS**) DUE TO IMPAIRED PHYSICAL AND MENTAL FUNCTION RESULTING FROM COLD STRESS; **SNOW BLINDNESS/PHOTOKERATITIS AND SUNBURNS DUE TO OVEREXPOSURE OF EYES AND SKIN TO ULTRAVIOLET RADIATION, FREEZING TEMPERATURES AND DRYNESS.**

4.A.3. **COMMANDERS AND OFFICERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PREVENTING CWI.** UNIT NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS (NCOS) ARE ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF SM'S AND CIVILIANS. SM'S AND CIVILIANS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PERSONAL PROTECTIVE MEASURES.

4.A.4. DURING COLD WEATHER EXPOSURES, ANY SM OR CIVILIAN WHO EXHIBITS **UNEXPLAINED SHIVERING, EXHAUSTION, MEMORY LOSS, SLURRED SPEECH, DROWSINESS, LACK OF COORDINATION OR MENTAL STATUS CHANGES SHOULD BE PROVIDED APPROPRIATE FIRST AID** AND EVACUATED TO THE CLOSEST MEDICAL TREATMENT FACILITY (MTF) AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, OR IF MEDICAL CARE IS NOT AVAILABLE, BEGIN ACTIVE WARMING OF THE SM OR CIVILIAN BY GETTING THEM INTO A WARM ENVIRONMENT, REMOVING WET CLOTHING, AND KEEPING THEM WARM AND DRY UNTIL MEDICAL CARE IS AVAILABLE (REFERENCE B (CHAP 12-1)).

4.B.1.A. ENSURE ALL SM'S AND CIVILIANS ARE **TRAINED ON PROPER WEAR, UTILIZATION, CARE, AND MAINTENANCE OF ISSUED COLD WEATHER CLOTHING SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT. ENSURE ALL SM'S AND CIVILIAN COLD WEATHER CLOTHING IS CLEAN, DRY AND IN SERVICEABLE CONDITION** (WITHOUT HOLES OR BROKEN FASTENERS).

4.B.1.B. ENSURE **PERSONNEL SHOULD AVOID ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO USE IN COLD ENVIRONMENTS.** BOTH INTERFERE WITH THE BODY'S ADAPTIVE RESPONSE TO COLD. ADDITIONALLY, **ALCOHOL USE CAN IMPACT RECOGNITION OF THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A DEVELOPING COLD INJURY IN ONESELF OR IN A BUDDY. HEAVY SMOKERS (>2 PACKS/DAY) HAVE A 30% INCREASED RISK OF FROSTBITE. SMOKING AND CHEWING TOBACCO WILL BE DISCOURAGED DURING COLD-WEATHER OPERATIONS.**

4.B.1.C. ENSURE SOLDIERS PACK SUFFICIENT QUANTITIES OF PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT SUCH AS SOCKS, PROPER HEADGEAR, EYEWEAR (I.E. SUNGLASSES, GOGGLES, FIELD EXPEDIENT CARDBOARD WITH NARROW SLITS FOR THE EYES), SUNSCREEN, LIP BALM, AND SKIN-CARE ITEMS TO MEET MISSION REQUIREMENTS. USE PROTECTIVE CLOTHING (LOOSE AND IN LAYERS) AND EQUIPMENT PROPERLY.

4.B.1.D. ENSURE PERSONNEL ARE PROPERLY TRAINED IN RECOGNIZING AND PREVENTING CWI. SEE REFERENCES C AND D FOR ADDITIONAL TRAINING INFORMATION.

4.B.1.E. ENSURE SM **USE THE BUDDY SYSTEM** AND EVACUATE PERSONNEL TO THE CLOSEST MTF IF CWI SYMPTOMS DEVELOP.

4.B.1.F. ENSURE OFFICERS, NCOS AND MEDICAL PERSONNEL RECOGNIZE AND APPROPRIATELY RESPOND TO CWI. CONDUCT BUDDY CHECKS TO RECOGNIZE AND PREVENT CWI. ENSURE EACH SM REMAINS ALERT FOR CHANGES IN HIS/HER COWORKERS' PHYSICAL AND MENTAL STATUS THAT MAY REPRESENT EARLY SYMPTOMS OF CWI.

4.B.1.G. ENSURE **ONLY ARMY APPROVED HEATERS ARE USED AND PERSONNEL ARE TRAINED ON HOW TO USE THEM PROPERLY.** MORE INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND

[HTTPS://PHC.AMEDD.ARMY.MIL/PHC%20RESOURCE%20LIBRARY/GUIDANCE_ON_THE_USE_OF_HEATERS_INSIDE_TENTS_FS-55-007-0114.PDF.](https://phc.amedd.army.mil/phc%20resource%20library/guidance_on_the_use_of_heaters_inside_tents_fs-55-007-0114.pdf)

Other helpful links:

[HTTP://WWW.TRADOC.ARMY.MIL/TPUBS/REGS/TR350-29.PDF](http://www.tradoc.army.mil/tpubs/regstr350-29.pdf)

[HTTPS://PHC.AMEDD.ARMY.MIL/TOPICS/DISCOND/CIP/PAGES/COLDCASUALTIESINJURIES.ASPX](https://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/discond/cip/pages/coldcasualtiesinjuries.aspx)



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

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

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