



STATE SAFETY OFFICE
HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
330 OLD NISKAYUNA ROAD
LATHAM, NEW YORK 12110



SAFETY MESSAGE 19-07

Outdoor Physical Fitness Training

As the winter weather begins to turn warmer, getting outside for physical activities starts to become more popular. Walking, running, bicycle riding, and hiking are enjoyable outdoor activities. Some safety precautions should be taken to prevent an unfortunate accident or injury from occurring.

Walking and Running Outside

Pedestrian injuries while walking or running outside near roadways and crossing intersections can be disastrous. According to the Centers for Disease Control, in 2015 there were 5,376 pedestrian fatalities from traffic-related crashes. 129,000 pedestrians were also treated for non-fatal traffic accidents during that time. Most pedestrian deaths occur in urban areas, non-intersection locations, and at night. Alcohol use (by drivers and pedestrians) and traffic speed increase the chances of a fatal encounter.

(https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/pedestrian_safety/index.html)

If you are going to be running or walking near a roadway or an area with vehicular traffic, here are some steps you can take to make it back safely:

- wear reflective clothing during low-visibility times of day
- stay on sidewalks if available, or run facing traffic
- don't use headphones, or if you must, keep the volume low enough to enable you to hear oncoming traffic or emergency vehicles and use one earbud
- avoid known high-traffic areas
- let someone know where you plan on running and about how long you will be out

(<http://www.runnersworld.com/start-walking/11-tips-for-staying-safe-on-the-roads>)

Bicycle Safety

Bicycling can offer a low-impact, aerobically beneficial alternative to running. One of the keys to a safe ride is to make sure preventive maintenance has been performed **before** riding:

- check condition of tires and amount of tread
- check tire air pressure
- inspect the brake system and test before hitting the road
- check the headlight and taillight to verify they are functional
- check for any loose bolts, worn chain, or cracks in the frame



These simple steps can prevent an accident from occurring. Observing the traffic rules when riding on public roadways and using proper hand-signals will let automobile operators know if you plan on turning or braking.

(https://www.dot.ny.gov/display/programs/bicycle/safety_laws/safety-tips)

Wearing comfortable, reflective clothing, the proper footwear, and a bicycle helmet will also make the ride more enjoyable and safer. Helmet use has been estimated to reduce the odds of head injury by 50 percent, and the odds of head, face, or neck injury by 33 percent. (<http://www.bhsi.org/stats.htm>)

Hiking Safety

Hiking can be a physical fitness activity that you can enjoy with the whole family, or a group of friends from your unit. It not only provides physical activity, but can also be a very relaxing way to relieve stress. In order to make your hiking adventure as safe and enjoyable as possible, here are some tips:

- plan your hike, and let others know your plan
- do not hike alone, bring a buddy (or buddies)
- pack for the unexpected, the weather may change during the hike
- wear the proper clothing and footwear
- be cautious about wildlife

The United States Army Combat Readiness Center also provides safety information for outdoor activities:

<https://safety.army.mil/OFF-DUTY/Home-and-Family>

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

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

New York Army National Guard Safety Office Points of Contact:

Safety and Occupational Health Manager:

Alicia Howard
alicia.l.howard.mil@mail.mil
(518) 786-6097

Occupational Health Nurse:

Valerie Schwalbach
valerie.a.schwalbach.civ@mail.mil
(518) 786-4329

Safety Specialist:

Matthew Williams
matthew.s.williams117.mil@mail.mil
(518) 786-6040

Safety Specialist:

Chuck Austin
charles.b.austin2.civ@mail.mil
(518) 786-6121

M-Day Safety Specialists:

MSG Jerry Peace
jerry.l.peace.mil@mail.mil
CW4 Russ Hall
russell.l.hall3.mil@mail.mil