

SAFETY NEWSLETTER

FORT GORDON
GARRISON SAFETY OFFICE



Spring 2026

Topics For Spring Safety

- Ladder Safety
- Prepare for Spring Weather
- Sun Exposure Danger
- Spring Cleaning & Fire Safety
- Bug Safety
- Spring Pet Safety Tips
- Yard Work Awareness
- Car Care and Distracted Driving Awareness
- Motorcycle Responsibilities

National Ladder Safety Month

March is recognized as National Ladder Safety Month, an initiative led by the American Ladder Institute (ALI) to promote the safe selection, inspection, and use of ladders at home and in the workplace. Ladder-related incidents remain a leading cause of preventable injuries, often resulting from improper setup, overreaching, standing on the top step, or using the wrong type of ladder for the task. Observing National Ladder Safety Month serves as an important reminder that taking a few extra moments to use ladders properly can significantly reduce the risk of falls and help ensure everyone returns home safely at the end of the day.



For more safety tips on how to use ladders, check out the infographic on the next page!

HOW TO STAY ON TOP OF LADDER SAFETY

WHY LADDER SAFETY IS IMPORTANT



Improper use leads to injuries

- Overreaching
- Unstable ladders
- Wrong ladder choice
- Damaged ladders

PRE-USE LADDER INSPECTION



Check for cracks, loose rungs, damaged feet, or other defects before climbing.

COMMON LADDER HAZARDS & HOW TO AVOID THEM

- ✓ Face the ladder
- 3 Maintain three points of contact
- ⊘ Do not stand on top rung or step
- ⊗ Avoid overreaching



SELECTING THE RIGHT LADDER FOR THE RIGHT JOB

- 1 **Consider the environment:**
 - Are there overhead power lines?
 - Is the area uneven?
 - Are there obstacles?
- 2 **Consider the length:**
 - It is unsafe to use a ladder that is too short or too long
 - It is unsafe to use the top cap of a step ladder
 - Extension ladders should extend 3 feet beyond the support point
- 3 **Pay Attention to the Duty Rating**
 - Duty Rating is the total amount of weight your ladder will support.
 - Duty Rating = Your Weight + Weight of Tools, Equipment and Supplies

LADDER SAFETY DO'S

Stay near the middle of the ladder

Maintain three points of contact while climbing

Use on a stable, even surface

Face the ladder while climbing

Always carry tools in a toolbelt, holster, or pouch to keep hands free

Use proper footwear with treads



FOLLOW THESE SAFETY GUIDELINES



How to Prepare for Spring Weather

- Organize an Emergency Plan including safety routes
- Go inside when you hear thunder
- Protect your electronics by utilizing surge protectors
- Keep an Emergency Kit that includes first aid, water, blankets, batteries, flashlights and a weather radio
- Prepare for power outages
- Stay away from downed power lines as electricity may still be flowing

Spring weather often brings warmer temperatures and longer days, but it can also bring severe storms, heavy rain, strong winds, and even tornadoes. Because conditions can change quickly, it's important to take steps now to prepare your home and have a plan to keep everyone safe. Visit [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) for more information on how to prepare.



Sun Exposure Danger

As the days grow longer and warmer, outdoor activities become more appealing. However, early spring brings a hidden danger: increased exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Many people underestimate UV exposure in cooler temps. Unlike summer, when warmth serves as a natural reminder, the cooler air of spring can create a false sense of security. As a result, people may spend extended periods outdoors without adequate sun protection. Protect yourself from UV radiation by wearing sunscreen, using sunglasses and protective clothing, limiting direct sun exposure during peak midday hours, and by checking the UV Index.

Stay Safe from Bugs This Spring

As temperatures rise in the spring, insects such as mosquitoes, ticks, and bees become more active, making it important to take steps to protect yourself while enjoying the outdoors. Wear long sleeves and pants when possible, use insect repellent to help prevent bites, and check your body and clothing for ticks after spending time in wooded or grassy areas. Keeping outdoor areas clean by removing standing water and trash can also help reduce insects.

Spring Cleaning for Fire Safety

Spring cleaning is a great way to refresh your home, but it's also important to keep fire safety in mind with these tips:

1. Test your home's smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.
2. Don't use electrical appliances with frayed cords.
3. Check for water around electrical appliances.
4. Clean debris from your clothes dryer lint trap and exhaust duct.
5. Remove dead leaves and other debris around foundations, decks, porches, and stairs.
6. Check grills for rust, worn parts, insects, grease, and other debris before use.
7. Grills should only be used when at least 10 feet away from your house or any other building.
8. Avoid storing flammable materials near heat sources.



Spring Cleaning

Spring cleaning is a great opportunity to refresh your home, but it's important to keep safety in mind while tackling seasonal cleaning tasks.

- Watch for trip hazards: Keep walkways clear of cords, boxes, and clutter while you clean
- Use cleaning products safely: Follow label instructions and avoid mixing chemicals that could create harmful fumes
- Store responsibly: Keep all chemicals and household cleaning supplies locked away from children and pets
- Protect your hands and lungs: Wear gloves and consider a mask when dealing with dust, mold, or strong cleaners
- Declutter responsibly: Dispose of unwanted items properly and avoid stacking items in unstable piles

Stay Safe During Spring Yard Work

Spring is a great time for yard work, but activities like mowing and digging can present safety hazards. When mowing, wear protective gear, clear the yard of rocks and debris, and never place hands near moving blades. If you plan to dig for landscaping, be aware of underground utilities by calling 811 to know where it's safe to dig. Taking a few precautions can help prevent injuries and make spring yard work safer for everyone!

Distracted Driving Awareness

April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month, a time to remind drivers of the dangers of taking their attention away from the road.

Distractions such as texting, adjusting the radio, eating, or using navigation devices can significantly increase the risk of a crash. To stay safe, keep your focus on driving, set up navigation and music before starting your trip, put your phone away or use "do not disturb" mode, and always remain alert to traffic, pedestrians, and changing road conditions.

Spring Pet Safety



Plants

Lilies and other seasonal plants can be toxic to pets. Be mindful when choosing your garden or house plants.



Identification

Collar ID tags should be worn at during outdoor time. Make sure microchip information is up to date.



Cleaning Products

Cleaning products are potential poison threats to pets. Keep cleaners out of reach and secured at all times.



Wash & Disinfect

Clothing, toys, and hands should be cleaned if you think you or your pet have been exposed to a contaminant or show signs of allergies or illness.



Preventatives

Talk to your veterinarian about parasite protection and prevention against fleas, ticks and mosquitoes.



Grooming

Keeping your pet clean and groomed prevents skin irritations from allergies, fleas and ticks. It also keeps their temperature regulated.

gnip good news for pets



Spring Car Care

- **Check your lights** – ensure all are working properly
- **Replace your windshield wipers** – wipers could of been damaged in winter storms
- **Check your tire pressure** – colder weather deflates tires faster
- **Slow down and drive carefully** – rainwater mixed with oil can cause slippery conditions
- **Watch out for animals** – activity rises especially early mornings and evenings
- **Check your allergy medication** – some may cause drowsiness



MOTORCYCLE OPERATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

INDIVIDUAL

Ask yourself...

- How do I become a safe and disciplined rider?
- What are my responsibilities as a safe and disciplined rider?
- What are the regulatory requirements I must abide by?
- What else can I do to proactively mentor fellow riders to support a safe and disciplined culture?



INDIVIDUAL

Motorcycle Operator Responsibilities...

- Informed my chain of command I am a motorcycle rider?
- Maintained my license, endorsement, insurance, and registration?
- Complied with my requirements in AR 385-10 and local policies?
- Ensured my motorcycle training was scheduled and completed?
- Attended other training or educational programs? (Army Traffic Safety Program)
- Reported and maintained copies of completed motorcycle training?
- Participated in my local Motorcycle Mentorship Program?
- Been counseled on safe and disciplined motorcycle operations?
- Completed the Motorcycle Operator Agreement?
- Ensured my motorcycle and PPE are properly maintained?
- Identified and reported high-risk behavior by individuals/groups?
- Used appropriate PPE on and off the installation IAW AR 385-10?
- Operated my motorcycle within my experience and skill level at all times?

**REMEMBER, RIDING IS A PRIVILEGE
EARNED THROUGH TRAINING AND
DISCIPLINE!**

