

Practice Safety

—prevent accidents

by Dr. Peggy Lynn Prescott

Accidents are real events in our training arena. Let me share a few actual safety-related incidents with you.

During a smoke mission, a 2-1/2-ton truck was distributing fog oil. On its return to the fuel and supply point, it collided with a slowing 1/4-ton vehicle. The 1/4-ton truck was stopping in order to issue a "stop smoke" order. Both vehicles were concealed by smoke.

Two individuals sustained second-degree burns while disassembling a fire simulator. They were smoking.

A soldier was cleaning his vehicle with the steam wand from the M17 lightweight decontaminating system (LDS). Disregarding nearby personnel and paying no attention which way the wand was pointing, he reached over the side of his vehicle and just dropped the wand. The steam went up and under the wet weather gear of a soldier standing nearby.

A private was per-

forming fog oil uploading procedures when, due to excess air pressure buildup in the fog oil drum, the bottom of the drum blew off. Result: A nearby private's arm was fractured.

Sadly, these are just a few instances from an alarmingly long list where a lack of adherence to high safety standards caused soldiers to pay a very high (and in some cases permanent) price. Increased safety awareness and less carelessness could have prevented the accidents

mentioned above. To avoid pain, loss, death, not to mention the lack of mission accomplishment, we must put our priorities in order and make safety number one on everyone's list.

One of your most important missions, as a soldier in the United States Army Chemical Corps, is to train, emphasize, and practice safety. As leaders and supervisors, our collective responsibility involves teaching and training to safety standards and emphasizing safety at the job



This is why you never stand over or place an ABC M5 smoke pot in grassy areas.



Top, SSG Frederiken and SSG Ito demonstrate the correct procedure for refueling the M3A4 smoke generator. Above, operating the M12A1 PDDA poses safety hazards ranging from scalding to potential fire hazards.

site. You make a difference; good leadership that emphasizes safety reduces accident rates.

As chemical officers and noncommissioned officers, you teach and enforce safety in your units and work place. We cannot put safety aside—our soldiers and leaders at all levels must ensure that safety requirements are integral, and not add-on considerations, to all aspects of planning, executing, and evaluating training. Good safety does not just happen. It takes hard work, command emphasis, and a solid, effective training program.

In light of the need to further sup-

port your training needs, we've just published safety guidelines for your use in the NBC, smoke, and flame environment. Since our mutual goal is to advise the commander and train our troops to the US Army's high safety standards, we have developed a safety package for use by soldiers entitled, "NBC, Smoke, and Flame Safety." This package includes teaching materials and a safety handbook for NBC, smoke, and flame operations.

The safety handbook is designed for your use in both field training exercises, or for leader's use during unit evaluation of a training event.

The guidelines can be easily altered into a checklist. You can use this handbook to construct your own list or SOP. Use the elements under each item of equipment and tailor the list to meet the requirements of your grade level, position, unit, and mission.

Safety is crucial to our operation. It's integral to our success, and important in effective mission accomplishment. In an era of ever-decreasing resources, we cannot afford to lose any of our personnel or equipment because of safety-related mistakes. Our command goals ensure that our soldiers and leaders understand their individual and collective safety responsibilities.

To maintain our warfighting proficiency, safety must remain a primary concern for us to reach and maintain our goals. At the Chemical School, we educate and train our soldiers and leaders on their warfighting skills, ensuring that safety guidelines are incorporated and integrated within all training events.

The instructional package and handbook on NBC, smoke, and flame safety have been approved and forwarded for implementation in our courses at the Chemical School. Further, the handbook will be distributed in our Tactical Trainer's Notes during the 4th quarter, FY90. If you need further information, give us a call: AUTOVON 865-4070/3748 or commercial (205) 848-4070-3748.

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