

THE SENTINEL



OFFICIAL SAFETY NEWSLETTER OF CIVIL AIR PATROL

October Is National Fire Prevention Month This Year's Theme - "Candle With Care"

Used safely, candles can fill our homes with fragrance and create a calming and welcoming mood. It's easy to forget that candles are open flames. If safety precautions aren't followed or if a candle flame is exposed to something that can burn, the same inviting candles can start a deadly fire.

That's what happened in a Louisiana family's home in March 2005. Five adults and 10 children under 18 had just moved into a two-story townhouse apartment and were using tea lights for lighting until the power company turned on their electricity. During the night, a candle sitting on a windowsill ignited bedding in a room on the second floor of the house. One man, carrying a young child, escaped through a second floor window. In a desperate attempt to put the fire out, two family members moved the burning mattress down the stairs and put it on a pile of cardboard boxes while they tried to open the front door. Unfortunately, they had difficulties with the dead-bolt lock, and the burning mattress ignited the boxes, producing so much fire and smoke that escape through the front door became impossible.

The two who had brought the mattress downstairs escaped through a rear kitchen door and left the door open. One of them then went around the building to the front door and kicked the door in. The front of the structure was engulfed in the ensuing burst of flames. 11 of the 15 household members died. It was one of the deadliest fires in Louisiana.

Although unusually deadly, this fire was not an isolated incident. The number of candle

fires in the United States has tripled since 1990. In 2002, an estimated 18,000 home fires started by candles were reported to fire departments. These 18,000 fires caused 130 civilian deaths, 1,350 civilian injuries, and an estimated property loss of \$333 million. The number of home candle fires stabilized from 2001 to 2002. The year 2002 was the first since 1995 that did not result in a new high.

Preventing candle fires is relatively easy. Make sure the candle is on a fireproof surface, that it's stable and in a place where it can't be bumped. Also keep flammable items away that might accidentally get in the flame because of a child or pet. The most important rule is:

**"DON'T LEAVE A LIGHTED CANDLE UNATTENDED
"Use Candles with Care—When you go out, blow out!"**

CAP-USAF Warns: Ballistic Recovery Systems A Potential Hazard to CAP

By Major Eric Webster, USAF, NCLR Director of Training

Do you realize there are will be over 40,000 ballistic recovery systems (BRS) in use on aircraft throughout the United States within the next two years? How does this affect the CAP first responder? An aircraft that crashes without deploying the rocket-extracted parachute contains an explosive-charge hazard. Depending on the level of damage the BRS system sustains during the crash, a significant level of risk may be involved for a first responder. CAP responders should be aware the hazard exists and take steps to deal it. The steps are relatively simple:

1. **Identify** by knowing what to look for - external markings or labels. Look for BRS components scattered in the wreckage. For more information, visit: <http://www.brsparachutes.com/firstresponder.html>



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2. **Notify** experts trained on how to “disarm” the BRS components. The 24-hour point of contact may be reached at:

(651) 457-7491 or
(800) 279-4322.

Idea: The North Central Liaison Region includes BRS scenarios in SAREX and SAREVALs.



CAP Safety Day

To help us start the new fiscal year in the right direction, MGen Pineda is directing every commander to have a CAP Safety Day sometime during the month of October. He is letting the commander pick the day to maximize flexibility and attendance. Notice, it's not called a “down day.” Flying is not only permitted, it's encouraged. If we're having trouble with landings, it makes sense to practice them. You, the members of Civil Air Patrol, should be congratulated for all your efforts in reducing Civil Air Patrol accidents this year. Compared to last year, we cut the number in half! Now that we're on a roll, we need to keep it going.

Why have a Safety Day? There are several reasons. As busy as we've been lately with Hurricane disaster relief, we need to take the time to: Pause and look at how we conduct business - What is your attitude toward risk? Does the unit exhibit a healthy organizational culture? Does the unit train effectively? Do members interact effectively?

Review past problem areas (trends) - You remember the old adage – “Those that ignore the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them in the future.”

Learn how to manage risk - Formally for CAP activities and informally in our personal lives.

Conduct a pre-emptive strike on future mishaps - This is an opportunity for us to be proactive in mishap prevention, rather than reactive.

A presentation was developed that will not only help you get organized, but also provides slides on statistics, accidents, trends, organizational culture, risk management and numerous other topics that may fit into your Safety Day plans. A CD containing this presentation was given to all National Conference attendees and can also be found on the web at:

http://level2.cap.gov/documents/Preparing_For_CAP_National_Safety_Day.ppt

The information presented that day should cover the full spectrum of CAP activities; seniors to cadets, aviation, driving, ground teams, etc. Tailoring the presentations to the season, as well as local risks and activities is highly encouraged. Let's cut the accidents in half again this year!

Operation CAPSAFE

MGen Pineda has appointed Col Lyle E. Letteer, Jr. as CAP's National Safety Officer. Col Letteer will have an upcoming article in the next edition of *The CAP News*, which will provide details on his initiative named **Operation CAPSAFE**. This program will solicit safety suggestions, for both air and ground operations, from every member. Each month, the best suggestions in each category will be rewarded with a promotional item. Start thinking about suggestions you may have that would enhance the safety of CAP operations and activities. Send your suggestions to:

CAP National Safety Officer
P.O. Box 1010

Locust Grove, GA 30248-1010

Or send an e-mail to: safety@cap.gov

FAA Aviation Safety Program

Have your notices for FAA events and seminars stopped coming through the mail? The FAA used to mail these notifications to pilots with current medicals, but this became cost prohibitive. Now, the FAA uses an online notification system called **Safety Program Airmen Notification System (SPANS)**. Register at the SPANS website <http://www.faasafety.gov/SPANS/> and keep those notices coming.

Other Safety Meeting Topics

- Halloween Safety
<http://www.halloween-safety.com/>
- Tire Safety
<http://www.tiresafety.com/index.asp>
- AOPA SkySpotter online course
http://www.aopa.org/asf/online_courses/skyspotter/
- Treating Finger, Hand and Wrist Injuries
<http://www.informationtherapy.org/kbase/topic/symptom/handi/hometr.htm>

Let's Make FY06 a Banner Year for Safety