

# HQMC Henderson Hall Safety “Safety Checks”

*Make the right decisions! Your family, your leadership, your fellow Marines and civilians are counting on it!*



## Special points of interest:

- **Winter Sports Safety**
- **Cold Weather Safety**
- **Snowplow Safety**

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Command Web App

## From the Director of Safety

Happy New Year Marines, Sailors, civilians and family members!

As we shift into 2026, I encourage everyone to take a look at how they view safety - not only in the workplace but at home as well. Then ask yourself, is your effort for safety the same? Additionally, I then ask that you make the determination, is safety a want or a need for you?



This year, I am excited to say that we will continue with our National Safety Council's Family Safety and Health Magazine and we will continue our OSHA 10 and 30 hr. online training. \* This online capability will allow you more flexibility to gain knowledge on Safety and further support remote locations that this office serves!

R/S,  
Your Safety Office

## Happy New Year!

Welcome back! We hope that everyone had a good holiday season and had a chance to spend some time with family, fellow Marines, and friends.

To start the year off right, we will be hosting Back in the Saddle Training (B.I.T.S.) on January 15. We have some great presentations lined up for you this year.

The new year brings us colder weather, so we are providing you some tips to help protect you when out and about in the cold. Pages 2 and 3 will give you some tips to stay safe when enjoying outdoor sports, and page 4 will provide some information about how



to avoid frostbite and hypothermia. Pages 5 and 6 deal with the wonderful winter white stuff - snow! See these pages for safety tips on shoveling snow safely and staying safe around snowplows.

Please remember to continue to think about the safety of others as well as your own.



Stay safe & healthy!

## Winter Safety - Skiing and Snowboarding Tips

The snowy season is here, and you know what that means - it is time to hit the slopes! But before you start shredding powder, it's important to brush up on your skiing and snowboarding safety knowledge. Understanding the risks and knowing how to manage them can help you avoid accidents, plan for emergencies and most importantly, have worry-free fun.

First and foremost, make sure you have all the right skiing and safety equipment before heading to the ski lift. In addition to skis, sticks, and snowboards, you will need the following items:

- Appropriate clothes for the cold
- Ski / snowboarding helmet
- Goggles made to fit with your helmet
- Boots and bindings
- Sunscreen
- Wrist guards if snowboarding, in case of falls



Once you have everything you need, it is crucial to abide by basic skiing and snowboarding safety guidelines. The “Center for Injury Research and Policy” recommends following these tips:

- Always wear your helmet
- Protect your skin and eyes from the sun and wind - wear goggles and apply sunscreen as needed
- Make sure your boots fit properly and are adjusted correctly
- Prepare for the weather - wear layers of clothing and a helmet liner, hat or headband
- Do not ski or snowboard alone
- Follow all trail rules
- Stay on the designated trails
- Only go on trails that match your skill level
- Take a lesson - even if you know what you are doing, it couldn't hurt
- Before using a ski lift, tow rope or carpet, make sure you know how to get on and off and ride safely

Don't forget Slope etiquette: When you are on the mountain - just like when driving your car - there are “rules of the road” that everyone is expected to follow to create a safe environment and respect other peoples space. Here is a quick breakdown of the three main rules of slope etiquette that every skier and snowboarder should know:

- Since they probably can't see you most of the time, the people in front of you always have the right of way.
- If you need to stop, don't block the middle of the slope - move off to the side.
- Just like when crossing the street, look both ways before crossing or merging onto a trail. And don't forget to look uphill too.

Along with the tips discussed above, follow these three main guidelines and you'll avoid any unnecessary trouble on the slopes.

([www.rescuseslives.com](http://www.rescuseslives.com))



## Snow Tubing & Sledding Safety

According to a U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission 2014 study, there were over 52,000 sledding, snow tubing, and tobogganing-related injuries. In many of the incidents, injury would have been prevented if the operators and/or participants involved had followed a few simple safety guidelines.

### Types of Sledding and Snow Tubing Areas

Just as skiing and snowboarding can be enjoyed in a variety of ways within ski resorts (e.g. groomed runs, off-piste, terrain parks) or outside of ski resorts (e.g. Mountain Wilderness Areas, National Forests, State Sno-Parks), sledding and snow tubing can be experienced at areas in which sliding activities are managed and controlled or at areas in which they are not.

### Sledding and Snow Tubing Risks

Sledding and snow tubing are winter snow sports with inherent dangers. Participants have a responsibility to exercise reasonable care for their own safety and recreation providers must take reasonable precautions to protect visitors.

#### Common causes of injury:

- Colliding with a fixed object
- Losing control on ice
- Getting air off of a jump

#### Sledding and Snow Tubing Safety Tips/Guidelines:

- Designated sledding and snow tubing areas must be wide-open and free of obstacles.
- Hills must be of a moderate slope with a long and flat run-out area.
- Sledding/tubing in a seated and feet first position provides optimal steering and bail-out ability.
- High quality and durable sledding and snow tubing devices should be used.
- Avoid sliding activities on bumpy slopes or off of jumps.
- Sledding/tubing should be done on snow rather than ice.
- Sliding activities should be limited to hills with adequate snow coverage.
- Children should be closely supervised by an adult at all times.
- Wearing a helmet while sledding/tubing can greatly reduce traumatic brain injuries.
- Proper winter apparel for anticipated weather conditions should be worn.

Follow these tips to have a safe tubing or sledding experience and enjoy the rest of the winter.

(<https://www.robsonforensic.com/>)



### Sledding Safety



Always wear a helmet when sledding. A snow sports helmet is best, but a bicycle helmet works too.



Use sleds that can be steered, not snow tubes or round disks. Fix broken or missing parts.



Always ride sleds feet-first, not head-first.



Join your child at the sledding hill. Adults see dangers that children might not see and can quickly help if an injury does happen.



Do not sled on hills with trees, fences, and other obstacles. Make sure there is space to stop safely at the bottom of the hill, away from roads and water.



Teach your child how to steer the sled on a small hill before moving to larger hills. Show your child where to walk up the hill away from other sledgers.

## Cold Weather Safety

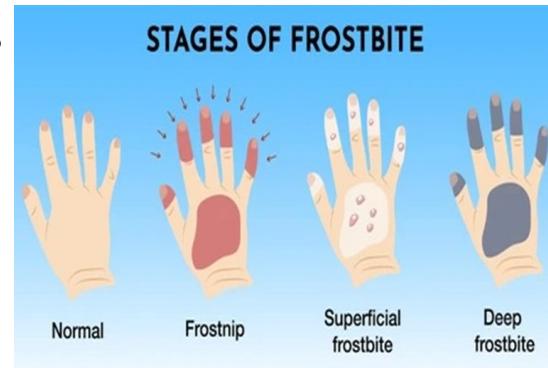
**Cold weather can be dangerous for anyone who spends time outdoors, either for work or pleasure.**

Exposure to low temperatures along with wind and moisture can cause two dangerous conditions - frostbite and hypothermia. Below are some recommendations you should consider before venturing out into the cold weather:

- Check the temperature and limit time outdoors if it is very cold, wet, or windy.
- Bundle up in several layers of loose clothing
- Wear mittens rather than gloves (keeps your fingers warmer)
- Cover your head and ears with a warm hat
- Wear socks that will keep your feet warm and dry

**Frostbite:** Even skin that is protected can be subject to frostbite. Frostbite is the most common injury resulting from exposure to cold, and it usually occurs on fingers, toes, nose, ears, cheeks, and chin. If caught early, it is possible to prevent permanent damage. If not, frostbite can cause tissue death and even lead to amputation. Superficial frostbite affects the skin surface. The skin appears white, waxy, or grayish-yellow and is cold and numb. If it progresses to deep frostbite, all layers of the skin are affected and it is much more serious. The skin will become completely numb, blisters may form, and eventually the tissue dies and turns black. If you suspect frostbite, you should:

- Move the victim out of the cold and into a warm place ASAP
- Remove wet clothing and constricting items
- Protect between fingers and toes with dry gauze
- Seek medical attention as soon as possible
- Warm the frostbitten area in lukewarm water for 20-30 minutes (Only if medical care will be delayed and there is no danger of the skin refreezing)
- Do not use chemical warmers directly on frostbitten tissue
- Protect and elevate the frostbitten area



**Hypothermia:** Occurs when the body's core temperature drops below 95 degrees. Hypothermia is most associated with exposure to extreme cold, but it can also occur at higher temperatures if a person becomes chilled by being soaked with rain or submerged in water. Severe shivering, one of the first signs of hypothermia, helps by keeping the body warm. But as hypothermia progresses, shivering gives way to drowsiness or exhaustion, confusion, shallow breathing, and eventually, unconsciousness and death. If you see someone suffering from hypothermia:

- Check breathing and call 911 (**Immediate** medical care is needed, except in mild cases)
- Provide CPR if unresponsive and not breathing normally
- Quickly move the victim out of the cold, and remove wet clothing
- Warm the victim with blankets or warm clothing
- Do not rub or massage the victim's skin
- Be very gentle when handling the victim

**\*NOTE:** These steps are not a substitute for proper medical care. Be sure to seek medical attention as soon as possible. (NSC.org)

## Warning Signs of Hypothermia



## Snow Shoveling Safety

When the driveway and walkways are coated in a thick blanket of snow, its time to get a shovel out for what some consider to be a dreaded chore. But before you tackle the first snowfall of the season, take some time to read these snow shoveling safety tips to help avoid any potential injuries.



Snow shoveling can lead to a number of health risks for many people, from back injuries to heart attacks, the mix of cold temperatures and physical exertion increases the workload on the heart, which may increase the risk of a heart attack for some. Even walking through heavy wet snow can put a strain on your heart, according to the American Heart Association. Follow these tips for safe snow shoveling:

- **Warm up:** Warm up your muscles before heading out to shovel by doing some light movements, such as bending side to side or walking in place.
- **Push rather than lift:** Pushing the snow with the shovel instead of lifting can help reduce the strain on your body. When lifting snow, bend your knees and use your legs when possible.
- **Choose your shovel wisely:** Ergonomically designed shovels can help reduce the amount of bending you have to do.
- **Lighten your load:** Consider using a lighter-weight plastic shovel instead of a metal one to decrease the weight being lifted.
- **Hit the Pause button:** Pace yourself and take frequent breaks. Consider taking a break after 20 to 30 minutes of shoveling, especially when the snow is wet.
- **Consider multiple trips:** Consider shoveling periodically throughout the storm to avoid having to move large amounts of snow at once.
- **Keep up with the snowfall:** Try to shovel snow shortly after it falls, when it is lighter and fluffier. Wet snow is heavier and harder to move.
- **Dress warm:** Dress in layers and remove them as you get warm to help maintain a comfortable body temperature.
- **Stay Hydrated:** Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated while shoveling.
- **Protect your back:** Bend at the knees, not the back. Lift with your legs bent, stand with your feet hip-width apart for balance and keep the shovel close to your body. Also, don't pick up too much snow at once; use a small shovel or fill up a large shovel no more than half full.
- **Listen to your body:** This is the most important snow shoveling tip. If something feels abnormal, or if you're tired, it is time to stop.
- **If you are experiencing an emergency, call 911 immediately.**

If you don't exercise on a regular basis, are middle-aged or older, or have any health conditions such as heart disease or high blood pressure, you should check with your doctor before doing any strenuous shoveling. Consider using a snow blower or snow removal service as an alternative means of snow removal.

*(travelers.com & mayoclinic.org)*



## Safe Driving - Snowplow Safety

Snowplows make roads safer for everyone. Cars, SUVs, school buses, trucks and pedestrians are all better off once they've cleared the roads. The plows make the roads passable and reduce the risk of your car getting stuck in the snow. However, drivers need to keep safety top of mind when sharing the road with snowplows, which weigh four times more than the average car. A collision with one can be deadly.



**Snow Plow Safety Tips**

Unfortunately, collisions between snowplows and other vehicles are common. When sharing the road with snowplows, drive defensively and cautiously. Snowplows operate in conditions with limited visibility, particularly if they're driving in the snow or while it is snowing. Snowplow drivers can also be driving long shifts in hair raising conditions. They may be distracted, cold, tired, or all of the above.

### **Can you pass a snowplow?**

Passing a snowplow is a bad idea. They may be driving very slowly, but you are always better off following a snowplow than driving in front of one because the road in front of them hasn't been plowed yet! Even if you have four-wheel drive, just let the snowplow do its job before you try to pass it. Some snowplows come equipped with specialized front and side plows. These side plows jut out 10 - 12 feet on the side. If you pass a snowplow, you risk not clearing the plows, especially if visibility is limited.

### **How far should you stay behind a snowplow?**

Snowplows must go about 35 miles an hour to do a proper job. The slow speed may make you impatient, but you must keep a safe distance behind them. Snowplows may need to stop or swerve abruptly to avoid obstacles, including stranded cars. They aren't driving erratically, necessarily.

Drivers are up against unpredictable conditions, and if you're driving behind them, you will be as well. Please keep a safe following distance in case they need to stop suddenly or back up.

### **How do you keep your parked car safe from passing snowplows?**

You don't necessarily need to be driving to get into a dangerous situation with a snowplow. If you have parked your car on the street, and you pause while clearing it off to get inside to warm up, passing snowplows could plow you back in. Except now your car is running, and the snow could be blocking your tailpipe. Now instead of the exhaust fumes being able to vent to the outside, the carbon monoxide backs up into the car. It can take only minutes for the carbon monoxide to reach lethal levels, at which point you would pass out from a lack of oxygen.

Avoid this situation by clearing away all the snow around your tailpipe before starting your car. If there is a lot of snow on the road, avoid situations where you might be sitting in a running car when a snowplow goes by. If you do get plowed in, stay calm and immediately turn off the engine. You may need to exit the vehicle from another door if the driver's side door is stuck or call for help if you are trapped. Stay safe this winter. The snowplows are out on the roads to help you.

(<https://www.progressive.com>)



- ① INCREASE FOLLOWING DISTANCE
- ① ENSURE THE DRIVER CAN SEE YOU
- ① DO NOT PASS IN A SNOW CLOUD
- ① DO NOT PASS PLOW ON RIGHT