



United States Coast Guard
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

27 NOV 2024
FM: CHDIRAUX
TO: ALAUX
ALAUX 040/24

Subj: HOLIDAY RESILIENCE AND SAFETY

1. Please take a moment to read attached ALCOAST 445/24 “STAYING RESILIENT THROUGH THE 2024 HOLIDAY SEASON” and ALSAFETY 025/24 “2024 HOLIDAY SAFETY MESSAGE.” These messages provide valuable tips on maintaining well-being, seeking support, practicing self-care, and preventing mishaps during the upcoming holiday season.
2. The non-medical services that are referenced in paragraph 8.a. of ALCOAST 445/24 are available to Coast Guard employees. However, Auxiliarists can utilize any of the resources listed in the subsequent paragraphs, 8.b, 8.c, and 8.d.
3. We all have many things for which to be thankful. As winter and the holidays come upon us, all of us in the Coast Guard’s Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety convey our deepest gratitude for the Auxiliary’s dedicated service and wish every Auxiliarist a safe, healthy, and joyful holiday season!
4. Internet release is authorized.

Respectfully,

CAPT B. R. Schmadeke
Chief Director of Auxiliary (CG-BSX)

For many reasons including the value of keeping communication lines clear and open as well as facilitating access to training and educational tools, all Auxiliarists are urged to have their own email address and to keep it updated in AUXDATA II.

*All ALAUX's are posted on the Chief Director of Auxiliary web site located at: [CHDIRAUX
ALAUX](#)

If you have a question regarding this ALAUX, please seek resolution within your Chain of Leadership and Management (COLM) including up to your servicing District Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX). If your question still cannot be resolved after that, then please email CGAUX@uscg.mil.

R 251250Z NOV 24 MID120001579315U
FM COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC
TO ALCOAST
BT

UNCLAS

ALCOAST 445/24

SSIC 6200

SUBJ: STAYING RESILIENT THROUGH THE 2024 HOLIDAY SEASON

1. The holiday season is often viewed as a time of joy, celebration, and connection. However, for many, it can also bring a unique set of stressors and challenges. Below are some practical strategies for staying resilient through the holiday season.

2. Set Realistic Expectations. The holidays often come with a societal pressure to have everything perfect; however, perfectionism can lead to stress and burnout. Instead, focus on what matters most to you and set realistic goals for yourself. Prioritize meaningful connections with family and friends over idealized traditions and remember that it's okay if everything isn't flawless.

3. Practice Self-Care. Amid the hustle and bustle, self-care is often the first thing to get overlooked. But taking time to recharge is crucial for maintaining wellness. Committing to and following through with positive routine habits like regular exercise, healthy eating, getting enough sleep, and engaging in activities that bring you joy, can have a significant positive impact on your personal and professional life. Even small moments of mindfulness or meditation can provide a sense of calm and help you reset your emotional state.

4. Create Boundaries. For many, the holidays bring with them complex family dynamics. Whether it's navigating difficult conversations, handling unresolved conflicts, or managing different expectations, family interactions can add to your stress. Staying resilient through the holidays includes creating healthy boundaries to maintain your mental health. It's easy to feel obligated to attend every gathering or fulfill every request, but overcommitting can lead to stress and burnout. Be honest with yourself and others about what you can handle, and don't be afraid to say "no" when necessary. Protecting your time and energy is an act of self-respect that helps you stay resilient.

5. Cultivate Gratitude. The holiday season can sometimes magnify feelings of loss, loneliness, or stress. A powerful antidote to these emotions is cultivating gratitude. Take time each day to reflect on the things you're thankful for--whether it's supportive friends and family, good health, or small moments of joy. Keeping a gratitude journal or simply expressing appreciation can shift your perspective and help you stay grounded in positive thoughts.

6. Stay Connected. While the holidays can bring up feelings of isolation, they also offer opportunities for connection. Reach out to loved ones or friends, even if it's just a text or quick phone call. If you're feeling disconnected, consider volunteering or participating in community activities. Sometimes, helping others can offer a sense of purpose and remind you that you matter and are not alone.

7. Embrace Flexibility. Things don't always go according to plan during the holidays--flights get delayed, dinners get burnt, or

schedules change. The key to staying resilient is learning to adapt to these changes with grace. Instead of stressing over what's not working, focus on what you can control and embrace the unpredictability with a sense of humor and flexibility.

8. Seek Support. Remember that it's okay to ask for help. Whether you're struggling emotionally, feeling overwhelmed by the demands of the season, having problems with substance use, or even contemplating suicide, talking to someone you trust can be incredibly healing. Support can come from family, friends, chaplains, or mental health professionals, and yes, seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

a. If you are looking for options to manage the stress or demands of the holiday season, free, professional and confidential non-medical CG SUPRT counselors are ready to support you at 1-855-247-8778 or you can chat online now (www.cgsuprt.com - password: uscg) to schedule an appointment. If you are OCONUS, dial your international code + 855-247-8778. CG SUPRT is free, confidential, and available 24/7/365.

b. If you are in emotional distress, struggling with alcohol or drug abuse, or thinking about suicide, you can also contact the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline by dialing or texting 988. The Lifeline is free, confidential, and available 24/7/365.

c. If you experience domestic abuse/violence and need help or have questions about this, you may call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233. It's free, confidential, and available 24/7/365.

d. If you are a victim of sexual assault or have related questions or concerns, you may contact the Safe Helpline (1-877-995-5247) or the National Sexual Assault Hotline (1-800-656-4673). Both options are free, confidential, and available 24/7/365.

9. By setting realistic expectations, practicing self-care, establishing boundaries, and seeking support when needed, you can build resilience and navigate the holiday season with greater ease. In doing so, you may find that the holidays can become a time for recharging and nurturing your own well-being.

10. POC: Mr. Jose Jasso, Employee Assistance Program Manager, Jose.R.Jasso@uscg.mil.

11. RADM P. Jung, Assistant Commandant for Health, Safety and Work-Life (CG-1K), sends.

12. Internet release is authorized.

RTTUZYUW RHOIAAA0001 3241332-UUUU--RHSSSUU.

ZNR UUUUU

R 191329Z NOV 24

FM COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC

TO ALSAFETY

BT

UNCLAS

ALSAFETY 025/24

SUBJ: 2024 HOLIDAY SAFETY MESSAGE

A. Safety and Environmental Health Manual, COMDTINST M5100.47 (series)

B. [Thermal Stress Program Tactics, Technics, and Procedures, \(CGTTP 4-11.9A\)](#)

1. 2024 was a uniquely challenging year for the Coast Guard. It will be remembered for historic Northeast winter flooding, the M/V DALI Key Bridge collapse, and the responses to Hurricanes HELENE and MILTON. The impressive response to these events by USCG personnel, combined with the already existing high operational tempo, increases stress and fatigue for Coast Guard personnel, which can lead to mishaps both on duty and at home. To reduce risk and improve holiday safety, unit commanders are encouraged to use the safety and risk management resources listed on the HSWL Service Center Safety & Environmental Health Division portal page at: [Safety and Environmental Health Division - Home](#).

2. Last holiday season, we recorded 80 off-duty mishaps. Fortunately, there were no fatalities, but those mishaps resulted in 850 lost and 1,764 restricted workdays, putting crew health at risk and decreasing unit readiness. Many of those mishaps could have been avoided by using sound risk management practices. This year, it is as important as ever that we reduce mishap frequency and severity by employing these practices. One best practice is to conduct a unit safety stand-down prior to or during the holiday season. Ref (A) requires all COs/OICs to conduct an annual safety stand down, which provides the opportunity for leadership to remind personnel about on and off-duty hazards, risk management, and safety programs.

3. The National Safety Council (NSC) offers promotional materials for a safe winter holiday season. This year's theme is "[Enjoy a Safe Holiday Season](#)" and can be found at:

<https://www.nsc.org/community-safety/safety-topics/seasonal-safety/winter-safety/holiday>

The site contains articles, links, and tools that units and families can use for safety stand downs.

Topics include:

A. Holiday Travel Preparation.

B. Decorating Safely.

C. Watch out for Fire Starters.

D. Food Poisoning is no joke.

E. Giving Safely.

4. More people travel during the holidays, and the risk of motor vehicle accidents is elevated.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that holiday travel accounts for the most fatal motor vehicle mishaps. During last year's holiday period, Coast Guard members were involved in 11 motorcycle and 15 automobile mishaps. Traffic safety tools to reduce risk while driving can be found at: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/winter-driving-tips>. Some of these include proper vehicle preparation, avoiding risky driving behaviors like distracted driving,

and always drive sober and obey posted speed limits. To help reduce risk when planning your holiday driving, use the DoD Travel Risk Planning System (TRiPS). It can be accessed at: <https://trips.safety.army.mil>. Additional driving safety information and tools can be found on the HSWL SC Safety and Environmental Health Portal at: [Safety and Environmental Health Division - Motor Vehicle Safety](#).

5. As we approach winter, it's smart to prioritize safety when working in low temps. When precautions aren't taken, cold weather can lead to serious health risks, including frostbite, hypothermia, and long-term injury. When working outdoors, make sure to dress in layers, cover all exposed skin, and use insulated gloves, hats, and waterproof boots. Take regular breaks in warm areas to prevent overexposure, and stay hydrated, as cold weather can be deceptively dehydrating. Keep an eye on the weather forecast to anticipate temperature drops and watch out for icy surfaces that can increase slip and fall risks. Any task involving physical exertion in a cold climate should be considered a high-risk evolution. The Coast Guard's [Thermal Stress Program Tactics, Technics, and Procedures \(CGTTP 4-11.9A\)](#) publication provides units with a hazard analysis tool that can be used to apply risk management principles and reduce risks to acceptable levels. Additional information on thermal stress can be found on the HSWL SC portal site at: [Safety and Environmental Health Division - Thermal Stress and Rhabdomyolysis \(sharepoint-mil.us\)](#).

6. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Thanksgiving Day is the peak day for home cooking fires with more than three times the daily average for such incidents. Christmas Day and Christmas Eve ranked second and third, with both having nearly twice the daily average of home fires. Cooking causes half of all reported home fires and nearly two of every five home fire injuries, and it is a leading cause of home fire deaths. Unattended cooking was by far the leading contributing factor in home cooking fires and fire deaths. The NFPA recommends the following Thanksgiving Safety precautions:

- A. Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking so you can monitor the stovetop and food.
- B. Stay in the home when cooking your turkey and check on it frequently.
- C. Keep children away from the stove and oven. The stove will be hot, and kids should stay three feet away.
- D. Make sure kids stay away from hot food and liquids. The steam or splash from vegetables, gravy, or coffee could cause serious burns.
- E. Keep the floor clear so you don't trip over kids, toys, pocketbooks, or bags.
- F. Keep knives out of the reach of children.
- G. Be sure electric cords from an electric knife, coffeemaker, plate warmer, or mixer are not dangling off the counter within easy reach of a child.
- H. Keep matches and utility lighters, up high in a locked cabinet and out of the reach of children.
- I. Never leave children alone in a room with a lit candle.

More information on fire prevention can be found on the NFPA website at:

<https://www.nfpa.org/about-nfpa/press-room/news-releases/2023/holiday-season-contributes-to-december-as-the-leading--month-for-us-home-fires>.

7. Please look after your shipmates and have a safe and joyous holiday season.

8. POC: HSWL SC (se), Mr. Ed Bock, Safety and Environmental Health Division Chief at:
(757) 628-4412 or Edward.L.Bock@uscg.mil.

9. Mr. Glenn Gebele, Chief, Safety and Environmental Health, sends.

BT

#0001

NNNN