



The Safety Beacon is for informational purposes. Unit Safety Officers are encouraged to use the articles in the Beacon as topics for their monthly safety briefings and discussions. Members may go to [eservices Learning Management System](#), click on "Go to AXIS," search for this month's Safety Beacon, take the quiz, and receive safety education credit.

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CAP Safety Beacon is changing

With the first issue of 2023, the Safety Beacon will be a joint effort between Safety and Health Services and renamed the Dispatch. The two departments will stay separate, but due to our natural fit and close relationship in CAP we feel it is an enormous opportunity to team up in a joint newsletter. Content to look forward to are National health and Safety trends, upcoming news about regulation changes and any other items coming down from National HQ. Recognition of people and events within our fields along with user created content. And, as always, anything that is fun and interesting to our members!

This newsletter partnership and our Facebook page is a wonderful opportunity to strengthen the teamwork between our two mutually beneficial departments.

Winter skid tips-

As we are in winter conditions already, here are a few things to remember about skids, both avoiding them and recovering from them.

- ◆ A stopped wheel will always try to pass a rolling wheel. As anti-lock brakes are useful, they are not to be completely relied upon in slippery weather. It is a very difficult thing to try to do but if you are in a skid and have no steering control, try releasing your brakes even just for a moment. If your tires roll and get traction, re-apply your brakes again. Using your brakes on and off again (stab braking) can help maintain some semblance of control in a skid, especially at lower speeds.
- ◆ Use your brakes gently. Finesse over force.
- ◆ Best way of dealing with a skid is to avoid one. Not always an option, but if you slow down in poor conditions you can reduce the risk.
- ◆ Maintain a safe following distance. You need enough distance that you can adjust for poor conditions. Empty vans can be worse in poor conditions as you don't have the weight of cargo.

Influenza-Like Illnesses to watch this Winter

By Maj Gerry Creager, CAP, SW Region

After two years of relative calm, influenza is making a strong showing this year. Recently, the U.S. passed the criterion for “epidemic” for influenza. This is the earliest we’ve seen this passed in perhaps 20 years and puts the U.S. on track for one of the worst seasons in the last decade.

Influenza-like illness (ILI) is a catch-all term, encompassing a host of viral respiratory illnesses. ILI includes complaints of fever, cough and/or sore throat. This obviously includes both influenza and COVID. It also includes respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). CDC data recently released showed that 5.5 percent of visits to primary care, urgent care and emergency departments were for ILI.

To date, CDC estimates include 23,000 hospitalizations and 1300 deaths from flu. 5 pediatric deaths, three in the past 7 days, are attributed to influenza for this season already.

Caitlin Rivers, PhD, from the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, has an article, [HERE](#).

Outpatient visits for ILI are ahead of the last several years. This early peak portends a more intense season – not a season that is likely to peak and diminish quickly.

One of the myths, recently dispelled in an article in the Journal of the American Medical Association, was that children were not affected by COVID-19 infection. In fact, during Omicron, children were disproportionately affected as seen by hospitalizations, although severe illness and death were not seen as frequently. HOWEVER, ILI has hit children the hardest in the last several weeks. Most of these have been attributable to RSV surging, which is at its highest level since 2018. Note: RSV is most dangerous in young children and older adults, especially immune-compromised persons, but can affect people of any age. RSV rates do not appear to be easing but RSV doesn’t have the surveillance infrastructure influenza does: It’s harder to track.

Finally, there is concern, including this author, of another winter wave of COVID-19. This is based on a rise in documented COVID cases by testing. Reliance on positive case counts has been difficult because of the drop in formal testing, and increased use of home tests with unreported results. Cases and hospitalizations are starting to rise, if only incrementally. While it’s too early to tell if this is the onset of a new wave, it’s a matter of concern.

Overall, less than 80 percent of the population eligible for vaccination for COVID has completed the full initial regimen, and less than five percent of eligible persons are up to date on their boosters. There’s new evidence that repeated COVID infections cause more and more problems with each exposure, to virtually all organs including the heart, lungs and brain. Vaccination is the best method to prevent or diminish the effects of COVID, and while no therapy is without the potential for unexpected side effects, those of the COVID vaccines are lower than many other drugs or vaccines.

SUAS Safety Concerns - Watch out for power lines

By 1Lt Eric R. Holtzclaw, CAP, OK Wing

The use of drones has increased rapidly in the past several years across the nation. This also has been occurring in the Civil Air Patrol and we integrate this technology into our Emergency Services, Cadet programs and Aerospace missions. Coming in various sizes ranging from the size of a hummingbird to a bald eagle, these remote-controlled aircraft are being used in a vast number of ways by government, industries, commercial enterprises and hobbyists. It's important to keep in mind that drones pose electrical safety issues when they enter the air space reserved for overhead power lines or crash into electrical equipment.

Some of the same things we learned about flying kites as kids carry over to drones, too, Even though drones are not tethered to you with a string like a kite that could potentially fall across overhead power lines, drones still present safety concerns their pilots need to consider. When planning missions and conducting your Risk Analysis, don't forget to factor in your take off and landings away from telephone and other wires.

Power lines are put overhead mostly to keep them away from people because they can carry voltage that can seriously injure or kill people if contact is made with them. When people enter that overhead space with drones, they should keep some of these thoughts in mind:

- Keep drones at least 100-150 feet away from power lines, electrical substations and other electrical equipment. Power lines can interfere with the radio signals to your drone causing it to veer off course or crash. This can pose danger to people below or damage your drone or the power lines.
- Should your drone get caught in power lines or crash into a utility pole or substation, never attempt to retrieve it yourself. Attempting to free the drone by entering a substation is not only criminal trespassing, but you can be electrocuted. Call your electric cooperative for assistance.

If you are in an unfamiliar area or don't know the name of the utility, most poles and all substations are marked with the utility's name and may have an emergency phone number. If you still are unable to contact the utility, call 911 and ask for assistance. Depending on where your drone has landed, it could cause a power outage or damage to the electrical equipment. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has more tips and guidelines outlined [on their website](#) including:

- Keep your drone within your visual line-of-sight.
- Do not fly above 400 feet above the ground.
- Never fly near airports.
- Do not fly in controlled airspace without an FAA authorization.
- Follow all FAA airspace restrictions, including special security instructions and temporary flight restrictions.
- Never fly near other aircraft.
- Always give way to all other aircraft. You are responsible for knowing your drone's altitude and location.
- Never fly over groups of people, public events or stadiums full of people.
- Never fly near emergency response activities.
- Never fly under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Take and pass an aeronautical knowledge and safety test and maintain proof of test passage to be made available to the FAA or law enforcement upon request.
- Follow all training guidance and safety training in the Technician and Mission Pilot task guides.

Take and Pass the Part 107 test to become a Civil Air Patrol Mission Pilot

Following these rules will allow for a safe and worry-free flight. You can find helpful videos on the [FAA's YouTube channel](#) or learn more by downloading the [B4UFLY app](#).



(L to R) 1st Lt Frank Hooper, C/A1C Justin Quinton, C/CMSgt Angeleena Sowell (background) 1Lt Raymond Cope and 1 Lt Jeremiah Blasi

Taking the Stress Out of the Holidays

By Lt. Col. Jill Silverman, MD, CAP

Ah! The colors, the smells, the decorations, the anticipation... the STRESS!! The holidays are coming. And for many, this results in feeling overstressed: complete with racing hearts, sweaty palms, irritability, changes in our own protective health behaviors (eating right, exercising, getting enough sleep). Bottom line – the anticipation of the holiday season brings with it the possibility of an impending catastrophe!

Maybe we worry that we can't produce the "perfect" holiday experience for everyone, that there's simply not enough time to do everything, and something will go wrong, no matter what. We feel on the verge of that catastrophe. We forget that we can deal with changes and forge ahead, that we can bend and twist and don't break, that we are resilient in the face of fear, of change, of anticipated failure.

These feelings are not unknown to most of us, and we are able to deal with them. We already know how to cope with most of these feelings because we are resilient. We can bring to our own aid the strategies that have helped us in the past, borrow some of another person's healthy strategies, and develop our own new ones. The feeling of being on the verge of a holiday catastrophe does not ever need to develop if we attend to our own needs and recognize our strengths.

Take a step back, think of the meaning of the holiday as opposed to the "work" needed to make the celebration a "success." Think of alternative ways to celebrate. Spend some time in a food kitchen, find a person confronted with their first holiday alone, go to the local hospital – DO something for others that will change their day and yours.

Holidays themselves are not the stressful parts; it's the anticipation of how well we "perform" for them. Taking the performance out of it, trusting our ability to tolerate change and benefit from it, and responding to the meaning of the holidays can only make them more fulfilling, more relaxed, and a far better experience for all.

Happy Holidays!!

Safety specialty track promotions

2d Lt	Kevin	Le	CA	TECHNICIAN
MSgt	Barry	Floyd	TN	TECHNICIAN
2d Lt	Brian	Coil	PA	TECHNICIAN
1st Lt	Adrian	Day	TX	TECHNICIAN
Capt	Daniel	McGregor	NM	TECHNICIAN
2d Lt	Joseph	Burt	PA	TECHNICIAN
1st Lt	Carl	Wolfe	PA	TECHNICIAN
Capt	Jody	Veek	MN	SENIOR
1st Lt	Kenneth	Monroe	SC	TECHNICIAN
1st Lt	Eric	Holtzclaw	OK	SENIOR
1st Lt	Cathy	Ormsby	WY	TECHNICIAN
1st Lt	Ronda	Faciane	LA	TECHNICIAN
Capt	Rena	Lawrence	MI	SENIOR
Capt	David	King	FL	TECHNICIAN
Maj	Jean Pierre	Moreau	NY	SENIOR
Maj	Larry	Morgan	LA	TECHNICIAN
1st Lt	Armando	Gomez	CA	TECHNICIAN
Lt Col	Tammy	Sturgill	CA	TECHNICIAN
Capt	Stephen	Littlewood	VA	TECHNICIAN
2d Lt	Susan	Wind	KY	TECHNICIAN
Capt	Kevin	Rausch	FL	SENIOR
Capt	Dean	Goodman	ME	SENIOR

A message from the National Safety staff

This Holiday season, we on the National Safety Staff would like to offer our most heartfelt offerings of peace and joy to all in the Civil Air Patrol family. We wish our members and their families a safe holiday season.

Be weary of winter weather, holiday stress, and remember to never drink and drive.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALL OF US TO ALL OF YOU!