

# Fort Bliss Safety Gram



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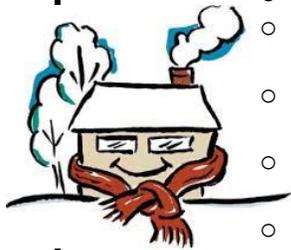
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## Personal Winter Safety



Winter season brings many fun activities such as skiing, snowboarding, etc. Unfortunately these fun activities can quickly become tragic if an accident occurs. Last year we lost one of our Fort Bliss Soldier while she was skiing at ski resort in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She hit a patch of ice, lost control and her head struck a tree fatally injuring her. When you engage in outdoor activities ensure that you use every safety precaution discussed below to help protect yourself from serious injuries or death

- **Going Skiing/Snowboarding?** If you're trying skiing or snowboarding for the first time, consider getting lessons from an instructor. Put on a helmet and think safety not fashion; it could save your life! Wear gloves with built in wrist guard to protect your wrists during falls. Make sure your ski boots fasten and release properly. Winter wear should fit properly, but gear shouldn't be so tight that it restricts movement. Boots that are too tight constrict blood flow, causing feet to become cold more quickly. When sizing shoes for outdoor winter activities, allow room for an extra pair of socks.
- Hypothermia and frostbite are two big concerns of working or simply spending time outdoors in cold weather. Both can occur at much higher temperatures than many people realize. Bone chillingly cold and a howling wind are not required to be at risk for developing hypothermia. Prolonged exposure to above-freezing temperatures can induce hypothermia. Some of the danger signs include uncontrolled shivering, slurred speech, clumsy movements, fatigue, and confused behavior.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of cold-induced illnesses and injuries and what to do to help others. Drink warm, sweet beverages (sugar water, sports-type drinks) to increase body core temperature but avoid drinks with caffeine (coffee, tea, sodas or hot chocolate) or alcohol.
- **Cold Weather Jogging/Walking.** Many injuries occur due to slips and falls on snow and ice:
  - **Watch for ice patches.** Wear rubber soled shoes.
  - **Take It Easy When It's Frigid.** Warm up slowly and run easy on very cold days.
  - **Be Visible.** Wear reflective gear and bright-colored clothing.
  - **Protect your skin and your lips.** Wear your, gloves, hat and lip balm.
- **Dressing Children for Winter Play.** Layering several light garments has proven to be more effective than a single heavy layer of clothing. Choose a light-weight material like cotton for layering.
- **Make Sure Your Home is Safe and Ready for Winter Weather.**
  - Insulate/wrap out door pipes that could freeze and break.
  - Make sure your home's heating equipment and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors have new batteries and function properly.
  - If you use a space heater, make sure it is UL or CE approved and keep it away from pets and small children.
  - Discuss fire safety and the house escape plan with your family each winter; the likelihood of indoor fires increases during the colder months.
  - Ensure you chimney is clear of obstruction before lighting a fire in your fireplace.
  - Safety kits can help protect your family in extreme situations



**With its cold and often stormy weather, winter presents many safety challenges. Being prepared and following these few simple safety tips can help you stay safe and warm this season.**