

# Guam

## Survival Guide

Navigate the unique hazards encountered on Guam

36th Wing Safety Office





**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS 36TH WING (PACAF)  
ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE GUAM**

4 February 2026

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL PERSONNEL VISITING OR ASSIGNED TO ANDERSEN AFB

FROM: 36 WG/SE

SUBJECT: Guam Survival Guide

1. Hafa Adai & Welcome to Guam! You shall soon discover why Andersen's location is both picturesque and strategically important in the Pacific where Guam has played a key role in history for multiple Pacific operations.
2. Our mission is to provide the President of the United States with sovereign options to decisively employ airpower across the entire spectrum of engagement. This cannot be done without dedicated Airmen who are fit to fight and prepared to prevail. Safety is a personal and mindful decision that each Airman must internalize while also being a good Wingman.
3. The 36th Wing Safety Office has prepared this guide to help ensure your time here is both safe and enjoyable. Guam is renowned for its beautiful secluded beaches, historical landmarks, friendly people, and some of the best scuba diving in the world. We sincerely hope you are able to take the time to safely enjoy all Guam has to offer. Please remember this is just a brief overview of the more prominent hazards on Guam. With any activity, ensure you have the proper gear, plan, and skills.
4. If you have further questions do not hesitate to contact the 36th Wing Safety Office at DSN 366-7233.

DANIEL R. WORKMAN, Lt Col, USAF  
Chief of Safety

## Preface

Guam offers many opportunities to include some of the best snorkeling and scuba diving in the world. Unfortunately, Guam also has many unique hazards that many people underestimate. This guide outlines many of the hazards on Guam and on Andersen Air Force Base. It is important to remember this is just a guide to provide you with basic safety information. It is an individual responsibility to ensure you have the right gear, plan, and skills to participate in an activity.

Take this pamphlet with you and look it over periodically throughout your stay. For further information, please refer to the 36th Wing Instruction 91-202. Should you have any questions regarding any hazards or safety precautions, contact Wing Safety at 366-7233. The 36th Wing Safety Office wishes you a safe and memorable tour of duty.

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# MOTOR VEHICLE RULES AND HAZARDS

## Guam Law and Island-Wide Hazards

All private motor vehicles must pass an annual Government of Guam Vehicle Safety Inspection. Before you buy a car, ensure it has a current inspection. The safety inspection and the vehicle's license plates are transferable to the new owner.

Guam requires all vehicle operators to carry a minimum insurance coverage of \$25,000 personal liability for each injured person, \$50,000 personal liability for each accident, and \$20,000 personal liability for property damage.

## Driver's License

Active duty military members may use a valid driver's license from the member's state of legal residence or an expired license from a state of residence that honors the Military Waiver, as long as the Military ID is current. For further information, please refer to the base legal office. Spouses, however, are required to get a Guam driver's license 30 days after arriving on island.

According to Guam Traffic Code 16: A person having in his immediate possession a valid operator's, chauffeur's or motorcycle operator's license issued by any other territory, Commonwealth, or state of the United States, may drive a motor vehicle or a motorcycle upon the roads and highways for a period not exceeding thirty (30) days from the date such person arrived on Guam. However, upon the expiration of such thirty (30) day period, such person must have been issued a Guam driver's license in order to continue driving on Guam. Such person shall be exempted from taking the written driver's license examination or demonstration test.

The Graduated Driver's license program is intended to ease new drivers into driving by requiring each driver to obtain a learner's permit, graduating to an intermediate permit, and finishing the program with a full license.

Personnel exempt from the Graduated Driver's License program must have received a valid driver's license from any state, territory, or possession of the United States or from countries that have been determined to use prudent and acceptable drivers licensing standards provided one of the following provisions apply:

1. Driver's license holders who have completed all steps of graduated driver's licensing who were issued a license in a state, territory or country that requires graduated driver's licensing; or
2. Holders of a driver's license issued by another state, territory or country who have at least five years of driving experience as a licensed driver, or
3. Driver's license holders serving on active duty in any branch of the United States Armed Forces who possess a driver's license issued by another state or territory of the United States.

The **highest speed limit on Guam roadways is 35 mph**. Many areas are hazardous and have reduced speeds. Guam's traffic laws require that the vehicle headlights be turned on during periods of reduced visibility (rainstorms, darkness, etc.).

Many of the roadways are made of coral and promote algae growth. They are subject to surface polishing due to wear. When the pavement is wet, it becomes extremely slippery, much like driving on a sheet of ice. On wet pavement, SLOW DOWN and increase following distance.

As a result of the coral roads, road conditions on Guam are extremely harsh on both car and bicycles causing the tires to wear fast. Pay attention to tire air levels and constantly check for leaks.

Most roadway shoulders are unimproved, so use caution when pulling off onto the shoulder. Numerous roadways on Guam have uneven or jagged edges with a drop off of one to six inches. If you drive off the edge of the roadway, grip the steering wheel firmly and gradually slow down without braking. When speed and conditions permit, steer back onto the roadway.

Due to the numerous potholes along the roadways, motorists tend to swerve to avoid possible tire damage. Be aware and drive defensively. Overgrown vegetation blocks roadway entrances, so never assume the person turning on or off the highway can see you.

As you enjoy sightseeing throughout Guam, you will probably notice the large number of passengers that ride in the back of trucks. This is not legal on AAFB. According to Guam law passengers riding in the bed of a pickup truck are exempted from the requirement to utilize a seat belt assembly, provided, that the following criteria are met:

1. The bed of the pickup truck is surrounded on all four sides by a secure vertical body extension, inclusive of a tailgate, that is at least fourteen-inches high
2. All seats in the cab of the pickup truck are occupied by a passenger
3. Passengers in the bed of the truck are twelve years of age or older
4. Passengers in the bed of a pickup truck remain seated on the floor of the truck bed at all times
5. Passengers are not leaning against the tailgate of the pickup truck
6. There are no more than five passengers riding in the bed of the pickup truck.

There is no fast or passing lane on Guam roadways, so faster drivers tend to do a lot of weaving between lanes. Remember, there is no road outside Andersen AFB where the speed limit exceeds 35 MPH. In addition, drivers making right turns nearly come to a complete stop before turning off the road. Please keep three things in mind when driving:

1. **SLOW DOWN!** Give yourself ample time to get where you're going so you do not feel rushed. Military members and their dependents have a reputation on island for driving too fast.
2. **Increase your following distance** behind other vehicles during inclement weather.
3. **Drive defensively and use safe following distances.** Be prepared for someone to stop abruptly or swerve unexpectedly.

Route #1, or Marine Corps Drive, is the most heavily traveled roadway on Guam and has many traffic hazards. Additionally, wild and domestic animals often cross this street without warning. Numerous fatalities have occurred on this roadway, so use CAUTION and DRIVE DEFENSIVELY at all times.

Route #15 starts at the Santa Rosa Gate and has been improved in recent years. However, it is a two-lane road that features encroaching vegetation, inattentive pedestrians, feral animals, and populated areas near the road. Due to the lush jungle along this route, numerous wild and domestic animals frequently cross the roadway. Sharp curves and frequent rain showers make it hazardous at times.

## Flooding

Low lying areas, such as the south end of the island around Naval Base Guam, are prone to flooding; however, flooding can happen anywhere on the island during heavy rain fall. Driving conditions can be very hazardous after a large rainfall. Drive cautiously and never drive through flooded roadways!

The Guam Homeland Security Office of Civilian Defense is a good location for up to date local weather and flooding areas. <https://ghs.guam.gov>

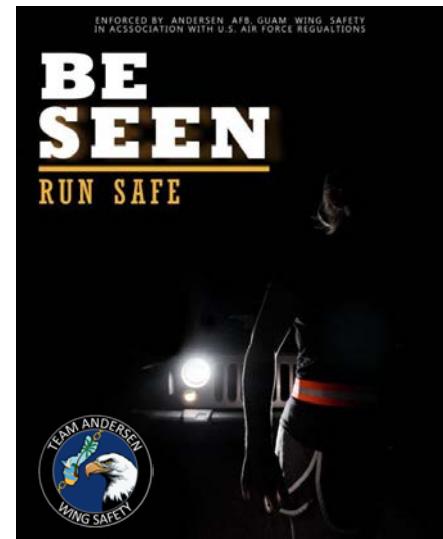
## Night Rules and Hazards

A good number of the roadways on Guam have poor street lighting and do not have shoulder markings. The edge of the roadways can blend in with the shoulder at night. The rule here is to SLOW DOWN and drive with caution.

The best way to avoid serious problems when driving at night is to avoid overdriving your headlights. At night, you can only see as much as your lights show you.

Everyone on Andersen AFB is required to wear retro-reflective gear that is clearly visible from the front and rear when walking, jogging, or running on roadways or in parking lots during hours of darkness or periods of reduced visibility per DAFF 91-202.

Although not mandatory, it is recommended that personnel off base wear some sort of reflective gear while participating in activities such as walking, jogging, running, or bicycle riding at night. As mentioned previously, the roadways throughout Guam can be very dangerous especially at night.



## **Motorcycle/Moped/Motorized Scooters Rules and Hazards**

All two-wheeled motor vehicles (including mopeds and scooters over 50cc) are required to be licensed by Guam. According to Guam law, you are required to obtain a Government of Guam license for motorcycle operation.

Motorcycles are required to carry the same minimum liability insurance coverage as automobiles. Please review DAFF 91-207, *The Traffic Safety Program*; contact your Motorcycle Safety Rep; or contact the 36th Wing safety office at 366-7233.

Motorcycle operators and passengers, and moped/scooter operators must wear a DOT approved helmet, impact resistant goggles or face shield, long sleeved shirt, long pants, sturdy shoes that cover the ankle (no sandals or loafers), and full fingered motorcycle gloves. Passengers are prohibited on mopeds. Operators must have their headlight on at all times.

In addition, active duty riders (motorcycles, mopeds/motorized scooters over 49cc) MUST attend the motorcycle safety course. Please call the Wing Safety office at 366-7233 for further details.

## **Andersen Air Force Base Traffic Rules and Hazards**

Unless otherwise posted, the speed limit on Andersen AFB is 25 mph and parking lot speed limit is 10 mph. **Speed limits in the base housing and DoDEA School areas are 15 mph.** Please pay attention to the numerous crosswalks throughout housing and the DoDEA School areas.

The Main Gate on Arc Light Blvd/Marine Corps Drive stays open 24 hours every day. The Santa Rosa gate is closed daily from 1800 to 0600.

Andersen has a unique mission with a large number of deployed personnel; so watch out for pedestrians, especially at night and during periods of reduced visibility. The most congested areas for pedestrians and vehicles are the AMC Terminal, Dining Facility, Exchange, Commissary, Coral Reef Fitness Center, AAFES Service Station, DoDEA Schools, and the parking area between the Child Development Center and Chapel II.

Motorists should be on guard while traveling on Arc Light Blvd near the Fuel Storage Facility (POL) gate. Many slow moving vehicles enter and exit the flightline and POL facilities at this point. The stop light is triggered by POL personnel to help prevent accidents. The light remains red while the flightline gate is open and can seem to take a long time to turn green. This is by design. Stopping a fully loaded POL truck takes three times the distance of normal vehicles, and this intersection contains numerous blind spots when exiting from the flightline side. Please be patient and proceed when the light has turned green.

Drivers should exercise EXTREME CAUTION when driving in the housing area (15 MPH limit) or on Santa Rosa Blvd (15 MPH before and after school). Children frequently cross the roadways on their way to and from school. ALWAYS STOP FOR ANY BUS that is loading or unloading passengers. Exercise extreme caution when the yellow flashers are operating (15 MPH while lights are flashing). When the red flashers are operating, **drivers in all lanes must stop** until the flashers are no longer operating.

When approaching a vehicle convoy or a vehicle transporting explosives, pull over to the right as far as possible and STOP. Remain stopped until the convoy has passed. Never approach closer than 200 feet to the rear of the convoy.

Report all accidents, no matter how minor, to the Security Forces Law Enforcement Desk at 366-2910/1/2. If possible, do not move any vehicle involved in a mishap until cleared by law enforcement personnel.

Safety belts and harnesses are mandatory on and off base for all operators and passengers. Approved infant/child restraint devices are required for children up to the age of 12 years. According to Guam Code Annotated, §1102(q), in which a passenger less than four feet nine inches (4'9") tall and between four (4) and eleven (11) years of age is being transported, will secure such passenger during transit in a booster seat or appropriately fitting child restraint system that meets federal motor vehicle safety standards and is used in accordance with the manufacturer's operating instructions.

## **Bicycle Rules and Hazards**

Bicycle riders are subject to all of the same traffic laws that govern motor vehicle operations. All personnel on Andersen AFB must wear an approved DoT, ANSI, or SNELL helmet at all times when riding a bicycle.

Per 36WGI 31-218: Bicyclists shall have their headlights turned on if riding one hour before sunset to one hour after sunrise or during periods of reduced visibility or during inclement weather. Bicycles must be equipped with an operative headlight visible from at least 500 feet to the front and a red rear light visible from at least 150 feet to the rear when operating at night. The operator must wear a reflective vest or belt during hours of darkness, periods of reduced visibility, one hour prior to sunset, and one hour after sunrise.

Per 36WGI 31-218: Bicyclists are prohibited from wearing portable headphones, earphones, or other similar devices while riding.

### **Basic bicycle signals:**

Stopping: Left arm extended and bent downward

Left turn: Left arm extended

Right turn: Left arm extended and bent upward

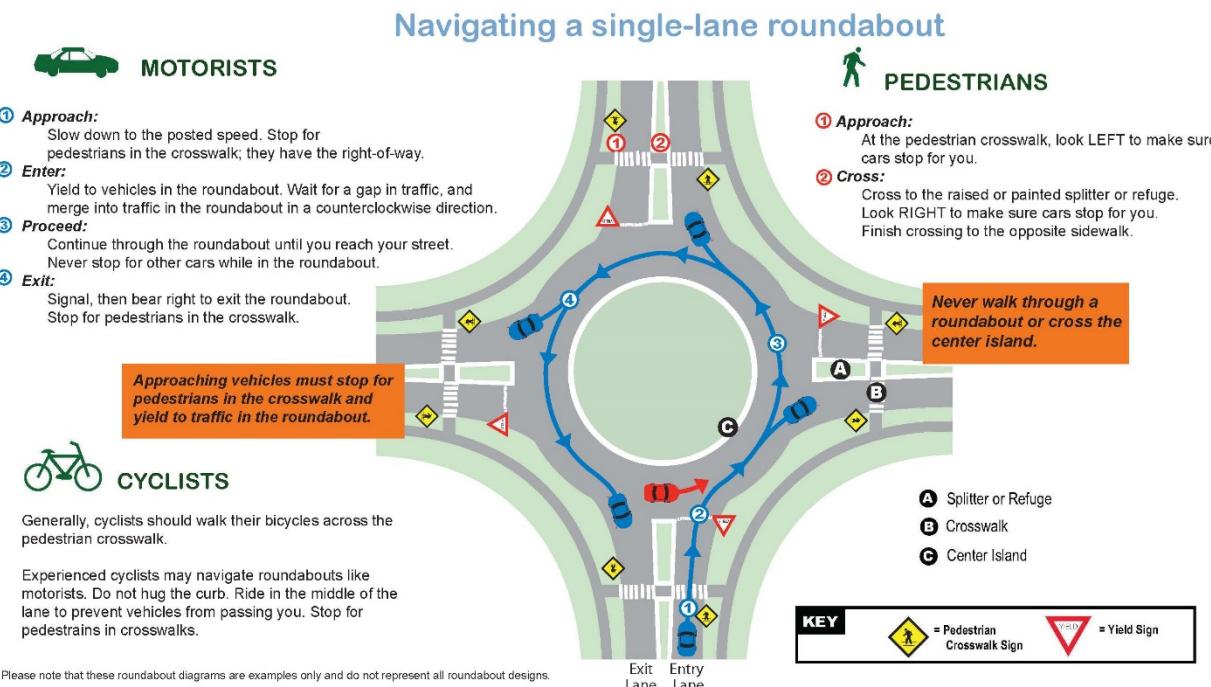
## **Skateboards, Non-Motorized Scooters and Roller Skates**

All personnel, to include dependents, who operate skateboards, non-motorized scooters, heelies, roller skates, and roller blades must wear an approved helmet. Appropriate Personnel Protection Equipment (PPE) will be worn per DAFI 91-207.

Per 36WGI 31-218: Roller-blades, roller-skates, or skateboards may be used in parking lots and other areas during non-peak traffic hours. Persons using roller-blades, roller-skates, or skateboards will wear a helmet and elbow and knee pads. Skaters must skate with the flow of traffic on roadways. Rollerblading, roller-skating and/or skateboarding is prohibited during hours of darkness or limited visibility.

## Traffic Circles

There are several traffic circles on Guam. The traffic circles on Andersen Air Force Base have an inner ring bordering the center of the circle. This inner ring is elevated and made out of road material but it is **NOT** another traffic lane. In addition, be sure to use your signal when entering and exiting the traffic circle.



## Flightline Driving Privileges for TDY Personnel

Flightline driving privileges may be granted to personnel TDY to Andersen under the following criteria:

1. Driver has flightline driving privileges at home station.
2. Driver receives flightline training by the sponsoring unit's VCO/VCNCO.
3. If you do not have a sponsoring unit while assigned to Andersen AFB, Airfield Management should provide the training. Their phone number is 366-4188.
4. After training is complete, have the VCO/VCNCO contact Airfield Management for a Temporary Flightline Driving Permit.

## Government Motor Vehicle (GMV) Usage for TDY Personnel

GMV's are authorized for TDY official business per 36WGI 24-301 and the PACAF Supplement. TDY personnel may use GMVs to drive off base for meals. Only reputable eating establishments are authorized. Questions concerning authorized use can be referred to Vehicle Operations Flight at 366-2021.

# RECREATION

## Walking, Jogging and Running

When jogging or walking with strollers, please be aware of traffic and attempt to jog or walk on the sidewalks as much as possible.

If a sidewalk is not available, always walk or run next to the edge of the road surface facing oncoming traffic. If walking or jogging in pairs, please move into single file line while vehicles are passing.

Cross streets only at crosswalks or street corners. Drivers do not always yield the right of way to walkers, joggers, or runners. Make sure you are seen and given the right-of-way before crossing roadways.

Exercise caution while in areas where Black Birds (Drongos) are nesting. They aggressively dive at runners and walkers in an attempt to protect their nesting sites.

All personnel on Andersen AFB are allowed to wear headphones (both ears) on sidewalks, Arc Light path, the base track, and areas along a road that are not specifically designed for vehicle travel or parking (pathways in the grass/dirt alongside a road). When crossing a roadway or traversing through parking lots, personnel must remove BOTH ear buds.

Wearing portable headphones, earphones, or other listening devices to include Bluetooth devices while walking, jogging, running, bicycling, or skating is PROHIBITED on Andersen AFB streets IAW DoD Instruction 6055.4, DAFI 91-202, 36WGI91-202 and the Base Traffic Code (36WGI 31-218). Wearing headphones on heavily traveled areas outside Andersen AFB is highly discouraged.

The road leading to Tarague Beach is called “Sanders Slope” and there are fantastic views where personnel are tempted to stop and take pictures. While this is not prohibited, 36th Wing Safety strongly recommends personnel refrain from stopping or getting out of their vehicles. The entire road is extremely narrow with numerous blind corners.

Members wishing to run on Sanders Slope are encouraged to use the wingman system and ensure they are able to clear the roadway if vehicles are present. Headphones are PROHIBITED while walking, jogging, or running on Sanders Slope and the corresponding Tarague Beach road. When wearing headphones, you must be clearly off the roadway and out of any vehicle traffic areas.

If large groups want to walk or jog on Sanders Slope, the following precautions are highly encouraged:

1. Road guards at the top and bottom of the slope with two-way communication to help direct traffic.
2. Notify Security Forces, Outdoor Recreation, and Wing Safety that formations or large groups will be participating in physical exercise on Sanders Slope.

Be aware that the majority of cellular phones do not work at Tarague Beach. To compensate for the lack of cellular service, there is an emergency phone available near the entrance to the buoyed swim zone.

## Jungle Safety

Guam's jungles offer views of beautiful flowers, World War II relics, colorful foliage, secret caves, boonie peppers (which some people love to eat), and hidden rivers. This tropical paradise sometimes becomes so irresistible that we feel compelled to enter the exciting and seemingly harmless jungle.

The Wing Safety Office recommends that you do not enter non-traveled jungle areas. If you do, take the following precautions, and notify someone when and where you are going and the time you will return. Andersen AFB Outdoor Recreation and Guam's Department of Parks and Recreation organize boonie stumps led by trained guides. In addition, many local organizations provide opportunities to boonie stomp. Check with the Outdoor Recreation, the Chapel, and the local boonie stomper group for more details.

**Never go alone.**

If you decide to go boonie stomping, please consider taking along some of the following items: water, compass, insect repellent, food/snacks, knife, flashlight, rope, cell phone, whistle, good shoes, and a friend.

It is recommended that you stay out of the caves on Guam unless you are prepared and aware of the hazards. There are many caves on Guam that are frequented and relatively safe to explore. If it's your first time, go with a guide who knows the dangers. Caves are not well lit, so bring a flashlight(s) and/or lantern. In addition, the ground inside the cave will likely be slick and the rocks may be very sharp. Ensure you are wearing proper footwear for this event and take your time walking inside the cave.

Once you enter the jungle, you may encounter deer, wild pigs, frogs, brown tree snakes, mice, bats, and coconut crabs that can amputate fingers if given the chance. If a crab's caliper gets a firm grip on you, it might not release even when deceased. The calipers will need to be separated at the joint.



Some of the insects you may see are ants, termites, several varieties of spiders, flies, gnats, boonie bees (paper wasps), and other stinging insects. You may also experience getting lost or walking in circles, due to the limited visibility in the dense jungle. If you get lost in the jungle, stay calm. The heat and high humidity can dehydrate you and increase your need for food and water.

Other jungle hazards include slippery undergrowth and vines, razor sharp coral protruding from the ground, cliff lines, and partially covered holes that go down hundreds of feet. There is also razor sharp and poisonous vegetation throughout the jungle.

## Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)

There are numerous UXOs scattered throughout Guam. These include hand grenades, land mines, bombs, bullets, antipersonnel mines, and rockets. Over time, these UXOs tend to blend in with the environment and may be hard to detect.



Grenades typically look like a rock or soup can



Projectiles (about the size of 2L bottle)



Mortar (about the size of 1L bottle)

Andersen AFB's explosive ordnance personnel are called out several times a week to dispose of UXOs. If you find a UXO, **do not touch it**. They may be very unstable. If you are on Andersen AFB, mark the location, immediately leave, and contact Command Post 366-2981. If you find a UXO off base, contact the local police department.

Coconuts are plentiful on Guam. Should you decide to open one, strike it with a blunt object. Using a knife or machete is discouraged.

Andersen AFB allows hunting in specific designated area using archery. Please contact the Conservation Resources for further information at 366-2549.

## PUBLIC HEALTH TIPS

Sun exposure is one of the most serious hazards on Guam. Due to Guam's proximity to the equator, the sun's rays are very intense. Wear a wide brimmed hat when possible and a quick dry shirt or "rash guard" while outside or swimming. Use waterproof sun block with a **sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 45**. Re-apply every 3 hours. If you are swimming or sweating, re-apply every hour. Do not allow yourself to fall asleep in an area exposed to the sun. Clouds do not offer sun protection, and some of the worst sunburns occur on cloudy days.

**Hydrate;** the combination of high heat and high humidity can quickly lead to dehydration. You should drink at least 6-8 glasses of water per day, more if you are engaged in strenuous work or sporting activities. Alcohol and caffeine beverages are not a suitable substitute for water as they can lead to further dehydration.

Public Health personnel inspect distressed food that arrives at the Commissary, and it may still be sold if found fit for its intended use. These items are marked accordingly. If you buy a food item that has spoiled or that you are not satisfied with, you can return it for a refund. Please take a moment to fill out DECA Form 40-45 (Food Quality Report) when you return any food item to the Commissary. This may help prevent future occurrences.

### Local Dining

One of the favorite local foods is Chicken Kelaguen. Some people choose to prepare this dish without cooking the chicken thoroughly. Undercooked chicken can contain harmful levels of Salmonella, which if ingested, can cause sickness. Avoid eating undercooked poultry. Properly cooked poultry meat should be white throughout.

When purchasing fish, ensure it was adequately refrigerated or preserved from the moment it was caught. Decaying fish may contain high levels of histamine which can lead to a severe allergic reaction. Even properly cooked fish could be affected. This condition is called Scombroid and is easy to treat with supportive measures and antihistamines.

If you are planning on traveling to an Asian Pacific country, Public Health can provide you with a country briefing that will explain immunization requirements, disease threats, and health information. Public Health is a customer focused flight and stands ready to help you in any way. They can be reached at 366-4147.

### Shopping / Exploring Off Base

When shopping and eating off base, you will find a good number of establishments that work on a cash only basis.

Many local establishments offer military or local discounts. This is especially true at popular Guam tourist attractions and hotels. Be sure to ask for the rate; it may not be offered automatically.

**Do not keep valuables in your car.** Break-ins often occur around trailhead entrances and dive sites.

# HAZARDOUS WILDLIFE

## Boonie Bees

Boonie Bees are plentiful around Guam. They are actually not bees but smaller tropical paper wasps. Paper wasps sting when they or their nests are threatened. They differ from honeybees, which have barbed stingers and can only sting once. Paper wasps can sting multiple times. A paper wasp can also call other colony members using alarm pheromones that tell other wasps to help defend the nest from a threat.

### Tips for avoiding bee stings:

1. Don't wear perfumes or colognes.
2. Avoid wearing brightly colored clothing, especially floral prints.
3. Be careful what you eat outdoors.
4. Don't walk barefoot.
5. Try not to wear loose-fitting clothes.
6. Stay still.
7. Keep your car windows rolled up.
8. Rinse your garbage and keep the garbage bin lids on them.
9. Don't hang out in the flower garden.
10. Call a professional to have unwanted bees, wasps, or hornets removed.

The **Brown Tree Snake** was first introduced on the island of Guam via military cargo vessels in the early 1950s. The Brown Tree Snake is a rear-fanged snake, but they can cause harm to smaller children and infants. There have been instances where snakes were able to chew on its victim causing harm. There has been no known deaths from these bites, and this snake is not considered dangerous to an adult human.



**Cane Toads**, also known as the giant or marine toads, are extremely poisonous to the common household pet. According to the Aquarium of the Pacific on line learning center, the secretions of cane toads are highly toxic and can sicken or kill animals that bite or feed on them, including cats, dogs, birds, and snakes. The glands in the skin and in the shoulders carry the toxins. These toads are poisonous in all stages of their lives—as eggs, tadpoles, toadlets, and adults. They are normally found at night.

**Musk Shrew or House Shrew** is prevalent throughout the island. The largest of all shrews, the House Shrew, was introduced in Guam after World War II. It is a host for the rat flea which can carry the plague bacillus. They are accustomed to living around humans and houses. They are can be smelly and noisy and make incessant shrill and clattering sounds. Shrews have glands that produce a toxic material that is used to subdue small prey like salamanders, frogs, snakes, mice, birds, and other shrews. Once bitten, the prey stays alive for three to five days to be used as fresh food. The poison can last up to several days and causes a great deal of pain. Human bites are rare and are



usually received only when handling a shrew. The shrew's poison is not lethal to humans. Similar to the Cane Toad, shrews are nocturnal animals.

Guam is a rabies free territory. In order to maintain a rabies free status, Guam has instituted a quarantine law designed to protect residents and pets from potentially serious health problems associated with the presence and spread of rabies. Andersen Pet Lodge provides a convenient alternative to off-base quarantine facilities. If you plan to bring an animal with you, contact the pet lodge 366-5020 or the veterinary office 366-3205 for further information.

# MARINE AND BEACH RECREATION, RULES, AND HAZARDS

## Beaches

As previously stated, Guam's waters offer a wide range of recreational opportunities. Swimming, scuba diving, snorkeling, water skiing, windsurfing, and sailing on Guam are some of the best in the Pacific. Along with this comes certain precautions you must practice to avoid inherent hazards. It is important to be familiar with Guam's location in order to understand the wind, wave, and current patterns that affect the island's coastline.

Guam is the southernmost Marianas Island. Rota is the closest island which is approximately 32 miles to the northeast. Guam lies roughly in the middle of the easterly trade winds. November thru March, the trade wind velocity increases, producing hazardous surf conditions on the island's northern, eastern, and southern exposures. Guam also lies in the northern extreme of the Equatorial Current, which runs along the equator in a westerly heading. The current speed averages from .5 to 1.2 nautical miles per hour. The Eastern coast of Guam has very few beaches where it is safe to swim, surf, or dive. This is a direct result of the constant wave action caused by the prevailing winds and seas. The coral that produces sand and protects beaches cannot grow as well on the exposed points. The sand that is produced is washed away and deposited in deep bays and other protected areas. The western side of Guam, however, is a more protected and has many long, sandy beaches.

**Active duty military personnel are PROHIBITED from Reef walking anywhere on Guam. Reef walking on Andersen AFB is PROHIBITED.** For these purposes, the reef is defined as the elevated ridge of coral or rock between the shore and the open sea. This ridge may be above or slightly below water level, depending on the tide. Keep well clear of the outer portion of the reef when the tide is going out. Rip tides are common on Guam and extremely dangerous.

**On Andersen AFB, water entry is PROHIBITED except in the marked areas at Tarague Beach. Scuba diving from any area on Andersen AFB is PROHIBITED.** Tarague beach does not have a lifeguard and water entry is only authorized between 0630-1830. Water entry includes swimming, wading, snorkeling, or simply standing in the water. Scuba diving from any area on Andersen AFB is prohibited.

For swimming and snorkeling, the safest areas are those beaches protected from the ocean by a barrier reef. Inside this reef, the water is calm, shallow and has only a slight to non-existent current. Swimming anywhere near the reef can be extremely dangerous and/or deadly. The barrier reef is usually exposed at low tide, but may be covered by one foot of water at high tide. There are two primary dangers in swimming too close or onto the reef:

1. The first danger is caused by the breakwater. **All military members are PROHIBITED from swimming in the vicinity of the breakwater.** This is caused when waves break onto the reef. Even in the calmest conditions, it is difficult and dangerous to cross the reef in surf. The coral itself is extremely sharp and can cause deep and painful cuts. Gloves and foot protection are essential. There are also large cracks and holes in the coral, which can catch a foot or hand and trap a person. Naturally, larger waves increase the danger and, in the past, have proven fatal to many swimmers.
2. The second danger is the current caused by the waves. In almost all cases where the waves are

consistently larger than one foot, a strong current runs along the reef. This current, known as a "long shore" current, is created when the water forced inside the reef by the waves is higher than the sea level outside the reef. When this happens, the water tries to flow back out to sea but the waves bringing more water into the reef prevent it. The water flows along the reef or shoreline until it finds a place to flow back into the sea. This current can be very strong. A person swimming too close to the reef's edge can become caught in the current and be swept onto or over the reef. If someone attempts to climb back over the reef, they have to fight the current pushing them sideways and they must fight the waves smashing against the reef. After struggling to cross the reef, many people become exhausted and are washed out to sea or banged along the reef until they die.

**All military members are PROHIBITED from swimming in the following areas: Pagat Point, Shark's Hole, and Shark's Cove.** Several beaches are especially hazardous due to strong waves and currents. Beaches from the northwest end of Guam around to Andersen AFB have consistently larger waves and are greatly affected by the Rota Channel current. The Equatorial Current compresses between the islands of Guam and Rota which creates a Venturi effect that increases the current by two nautical miles per hour. Although the current is slower closer to shore, it still is strong enough to make swimming very dangerous. Ritidian Beach, Gun Beach, Tanguisson Beach, Haputo Beach, Shark's Hole, Asan, and Andersen AFB's South Beach Scuba Cut are dangerous areas. Strong rip tide currents may be present during this time, especially on a high outgoing tide.

### **Riptide**

Riptide currents usually occur in areas where there is a low spot (cut) in the reef. Water, like electricity, flows along the path of least resistance. As the water comes over the reef, it becomes trapped on the island side of the reef. The water channels along the reef until it is forced back out to sea through the cuts, and gaps in the reef edge. Local water experts recommend you avoid areas known to have rip tide currents, especially during a hazardous surf forecast.

If you are caught in a rip tide, **don't panic**, remain calm, and do not swim straight back towards the beach. Remove yourself from the current by swimming perpendicular to the current (parallel to the coast). If you are unable to swim out of the current, try grabbing onto coral to hold yourself in place. If the water is too deep or the current is too strong, let the current take you. It will eventually slow down as you float further from the coast. You may have an opportunity to swim back to shore; however, you may expose yourself to getting slammed into the reef over and over by the breakwater. Divers call this the washing machine effect. If you see a break in the waves, you may be able to swim or climb over the reef and swim back to shore. If not, call for help, conserve energy, and wait for rescue crews. There is a US Navy helicopter squadron located at Andersen AFB who routinely rescues swimmers caught outside the reef. Typical rescue times are within 45 minutes.

### **Hazardous Marine Life**

**Treat all seashells as poisonous. Do not handle shells with your bare hands** as some contain live animals with a deadly venom. The beaches on Andersen AFB are designated as a marine preserve; as a result, **shell collecting on base beaches is prohibited**.

Turkey/Lion and Stone Fish are highly poisonous. They will not retreat or swim towards shelter when approached and should be avoided.



Stone Fish



Turkey/Lion Fish

For protection while in the water, wear some type of footwear (preferably felt bottom or thick gripping rubber/plastic) to prevent painful coral cuts, sea urchin stings, etc.

### **Scuba Diving**

Guam features many excellent dive sites and a robust scuba-training infrastructure with several large dive centers, boat operators, and guides. Do not scuba dive deeper than your certification level. Always use the buddy system and use a dive flag at the surface. Newly assigned military personnel (PCS and TDY) should plan their first few dives through Outdoor Recreation or at one of the local dive shops until you are familiar with the area. Many local dive shops offer free shore dives led by a dive master on weekends. This is a great opportunity to learn the local area and meet new dive buddies. If you have any questions, contact 36th Wing Safety at 366-7233. **Scuba diving from any area on Andersen AFB is prohibited.**

### **Snorkeling**

Guam offers some of the best snorkeling in the world. However, people venture out into unfamiliar waters and find themselves in serious trouble. The waters around Guam need to be respected.

Always snorkel with another person and use proper equipment: a snorkel, mask, and brightly colored fins. If you are not an experienced Guam swimmer, wear a snorkel vest (this will enable you to stay afloat if you become tired or carried out to sea). If a current carries you away from shore, wave one of your brightly colored fins in the air to signal someone on the shore to seek help.

Before you venture out, contact a local dive shop for information on areas you intend to snorkel. The National Weather Service (dial 211 off base line and 99-211 on base) has a recorded message on surf, winds, and tide conditions. Local TV, radio stations, and newspapers also publish this information. Do not snorkel when hazardous surf or small craft warnings are in effect. Have fun, but use some situational awareness and risk management before venturing out. Be sure to observe any posted warnings and remain within the designated areas for swimming and snorkeling. If the water conditions for your chosen location are not safe, pick another beach! Lastly, many snorkel locations are subject to car break-ins. Never leave valuables in your car.

#### **Safest Snorkeling Areas:**

- Tarague Beach (swim only within the buoied area and with your required wingman)
- Any beach in the Tumon Bay hotel row area (Hilton to the Guam Reef Hotel)
- Gab Gab Beach (Big Navy, no lifeguard)

- San Luis Beach (Big Navy, no lifeguard)
- Spanish Steps (Big Navy, no lifeguard)
- Outhouse Beach (No lifeguard and greater possibility of car getting broken into)
- Piti Bomb Holes (Do not leave valuables in car for possible thefts)
- Dog Leg Reef (Family Beach)

#### **Hazardous Snorkeling Areas:**

- Ritidian Beach
- Tanguisson Beach
- Asan Cut
- Gun Beach
- Haputo Beach

#### **Fishing and Boating**

Many people assume that since they do not intend to fish out of sight of land, they can get by with minimum supplies and safety equipment. This could not be further from the truth.

Winds and currents push everything away from the island. This is unlike larger landmasses where a boat may drift for days and stay in sight of land.

Even fishing boats in the presumed safety of Apra Harbor are routinely carried out of the harbor by the outgoing tide. Experience has shown that boats drifting in this area travel in a generally westerly direction at a minimum of one nautical mile per hour. Few people can paddle against a one-knot current for any length of time. Winds in the area of 15 to 20 knots can increase the drift to two knots. That means a rate of drift anywhere from 24 to 48 miles per day. What starts out a simple frustration (i.e. dead battery within sight of land), can quickly lead to a large search covering hundreds of square miles of ocean.

Always observe a measure of caution and good judgment when boating around Guam. One of the most important measures is to stop and take a good look at the situation. Ask yourself all the “what if” questions you can think of and make sure you have planned for the unexpected. Take plenty of extra water and food. Take as much fuel as possible. Make sure that the proper safety equipment is onboard. Have extra flares, a mirror, a flashlight, and extra flashlight batteries. Let someone know where you’re going, when you’ll return, and what equipment you have onboard.

No one should ever go out in the ocean without a marine VHF radio. Even the most experienced boater cannot shout back to shore when he breaks down. For swimmers and divers, always get advice from someone with experience before diving in a new area. Always use the buddy system. Keep track of where you are in relation to the shore. It is easy to drift and not be aware of it. Never take chances with the surf.

#### **Surfing**

Guam's location in the middle of the Pacific Ocean subjects it to many different ocean swells. Unfortunately, these swells hit on dangerously shallow and sharp reefs. Currents in these areas range from friendly to deadly causing surfing to be very deceptive and dangerous. The best place to learn to surf or boogie board is Talafofo Bay. In addition, pay attention to surfing etiquette and perhaps talk to experienced local surfers before attempting to surf on Guam. There have been a number of incidents where non-locals were harassed or even threatened by the “regulars” at the limited number of surfing sites.

# FIRST AID FOR MARINE LIFE INJURIES

## Coral

Symptoms: Burning sensation, redness in affected area

First Aid: Clean area with antibacterial soap. If it itches, apply cortisone cream. If the area becomes red and painful over the next few days, seek medical attention as it may require treatment with oral antibiotics.

*Note: Do not apply iodine to a coral cut.*

## Sea Urchin

Symptoms: Spines in skin, pain, or numbness in affected area

First Aid: Try removing accessible spines with tweezers. If they break inside of the skin, they may eventually dissolve on their own. Soak area in hot water to a temperature hot enough to be slightly uncomfortable without causing a 1st degree burn. Get medical attention for deep punctures.



## Crown of Thorns Sea Star

Symptoms: Pain or numbness, blanching (whitening) of the wound followed by bluish color, numbness or tingling of lips and mouth (may spread to entire body). In severe cases, the following symptoms may occur: dryness of mouth, loss of voice, difficulty swallowing, paralysis, muscle spasms, loss of consciousness, breathing distress, or possibly death.



First Aid: Remove any remaining spines with tweezers. Observe for signs of shock. Most of the time there is nothing else to be concerned about. In the event of a severe reaction, apply loose constricting band (such as Ace wrap) above wound. Loosen band for 90 seconds every 10 minutes. Transport to nearest medical facility and be prepared to administer artificial respiration/CPR if qualified. Check the Divers Alert Network web site for more info.

## Venomous Fish

Symptoms: Wound has pale, then bluish color, followed by redness, extreme pain, dizziness, headache, nausea, aching joints, fever or chills, distressed breathing, rapid or slow heartbeat, and finally death (low probability).



First Aid: Lay victim down and treat for shock. Wash wound with salt water. Soak wound with hot water (as hot as can be tolerated) for 90 minutes. Get medical attention. Be prepared to administer CPR if qualified.

## Cone Shell

Symptoms: Stinging or numbing sensation at wound, spreading numbness or tingling, muscular paralysis, difficulty with swallowing and/or speech, visual disturbances, or respiratory distress.

First Aid: Lay victim down. Apply loose constricting band (such as Ace wrap) above wound. Loosen band for 90 seconds every 10 minutes. Transport to nearest medical facility. Be prepared to administer CPR if qualified.



## Jellyfish

Symptoms: Pain, shock, redness in area, parts of tentacles in skin, muscle cramps, and nausea/vomiting.



First Aid: Remove tentacle using a stick, glove, or similar hand protection. Rinse with seawater (not fresh water). This is usually all that is needed and the pain should slowly subside. The sting from a Portuguese Man-o-War could lead to more severe symptoms. These animals are larger, usually float on the top of the water, and dangle large blue tentacles below them. If this is the case, attempt to wash the area off with saltwater and use something like a credit card to gently scrape any remaining stingers off the skin surface. Applying vinegar or alcohol to these stings can make them worse. Apply ice for pain control.

## Shock

Symptoms: Pale, cold, clammy skin; profuse sweating; dilated pupils; rapid or weak pulse; nausea and vomiting.

First Aid: Have victim lie down. Continue to assess patient's temperature, and elevate feet 12 inches. Offer fluids by mouth only if victim is conscious.

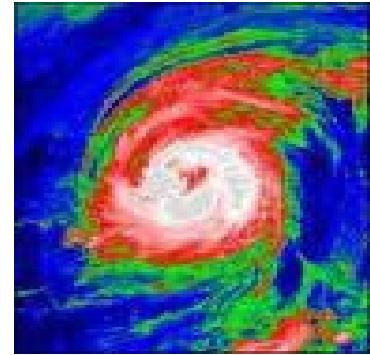
## Sample First Aid Kit:

- Sunscreen cream
- Lip balm
- Assorted Band-Aids
- Assorted gauze pads
- Sterile compress pads
- Roll of 2" gauze bandages
- Triangular bandage
- Isopropyl alcohol
- Aspirin/Tylenol
- Decongestant tablets
- Motion sickness pills
- Meat tenderizer
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Hydrocortisone cream
- Ammonia
- Antibiotic ointment Germicide spray
- Antiseptic soap
- Baking soda
- First aid book
- Blanket Waterproof matches
- Change/emergency #
- Cotton swabs
- Scissors/tweezers
- Pins/needles
- White vinegar

# TYPHOON, EARTHQUAKE, AND TSUNAMI SAFETY

Andersen AFB is equipped with a public alert system (AKA Giant Voice) that announces the Tropical Cyclone Condition or Readiness (TCCOR). Due to Guam being located inside Typhoon Alley, Andersen AFB is always in TCCOR 4 which is weather expected within 72 hours. The 36 CES Readiness and Emergency Management Flight always has the most current information with regard to typhoon preparedness. They can be reached at 671-366-3113.

A typhoon is a large-scale tropical storm that occurs west of the International Date Line. It would be called a hurricane if it was east of the International Date Line. A typhoon has sustained wind speeds of at least 74 mph. The warm waters surrounding Guam are ideal for the development of typhoons year round. Most occur Jun – Dec, but one can occur anytime.



## Tropical Cyclone (Typhoon) Condition of Readiness (TCCOR)

- **TCCOR 4:** Winds of 58 mph or greater are expected within 72 hours. Andersen AFB is always in TCOR 4.
- **TCCOR 3:** Winds of 58 mph or greater are expected within 48 hours.
- **TCCOR 2:** Winds of 58 mph or greater are expected within 24 hours.
- **TCCOR 1 Caution:** Winds of 58 mph or greater are expected within 12 hours.
- **TCCOR 1 Emergency:** Declared when sustained destructive winds reach or exceed 58 mph.
- **TCCOR 1 Recovery:** Declared when destructive winds have passed, but dangerous weather may still exist.
- **Return to TCCOR 4:** Sustained winds of 58 mph or greater are expected within 72 hours. Little to no movement take place on Andersen AFB during TCCOR 3, 2, or 1. The base traffic signs (stop signs, speed limit signs, etc.) are removed during TCCOR 3, so proceed with caution at all intersections.

**Typhoon Preparedness Kit should include enough supplies for at least 1-2 weeks.** Contents should include the following: canned & ready to eat food, can opener, 1-2 gal water per person per day, propane stove, first aid kit, plastic dining ware, flashlight/batteries, cash, mop/towels, duct tape, hygiene items, baby supplies (formula, diapers, etc.), battery operated radio, 550 cord/rope, medications, and tool kit.

## Housing Residents and Member Responsibilities

Please refer to the housing guide for detailed information regarding typhoon preparedness. It is recommended to conduct monthly inspection of storm shutters and secure the residence no later than TCCOR 2. Sandbags may also be required along door frames. Sandbags and sand can be obtained from 36 CES. Other tips include:

1. Move furniture (rugs, tables, etc.) away from doors and windows.
2. Bag anything that might get wet due to flooding.
3. Secure loose debris and personnel items around residence (doormats, trash cans, trampolines, vehicles, bicycles, generators, children's toys, play equipment, canopies, lawn furniture, BBQ Grills, etc.).

## Generators

After the storm, refer to your owner's manual and housing brochure for proper generator operations. **Know how to operate and hook-up prior to storm.** Call housing maintenance if unsure of the type of generator plug needed for your house. Also, have extra fuel on-hand away from the generator.



## Emergency Contact Information

Report Housing Damage to Housing Maintenance: 366-6240

Report Facility/Dorm Damage to the 36 CES/UCC: 366-5041/44/48

Self Help Center: 366-3165

E-mail: 36 CES/Self Help, 36CES\_SelfHelp@pacaf.af.mil

For Additional Typhoon Information: 36 CES Readiness Flight, 366-3113

## Earthquakes

If Inside...

1. Drop to the floor.
2. Take cover under a sturdy desk or furniture and be prepared to move with it. Hold this position until ground stops shaking and it is safe to move.
3. Stay clear of windows, fireplaces and heavy furniture or appliances.
4. Stay inside.
5. Stay calm.

If Outside...

1. Get into the open and away from buildings and power lines.
2. If driving, stop if you are in a safe location; however, stay inside your car.
3. Stay away from bridges, overpasses, and tunnels.
4. If possible, avoid stopping under trees, light posts, power lines, or signs.
5. If near mountainous area or unstable cliffs, be alert for falling rock and other debris.
6. If at the beach, move to higher ground.

## Tsunamis

Tsunamis are a series of large ocean waves generated by large undersea disturbances, such as a major earthquake or landslide. Tsunamis are not affected by tides or currents. A tsunami means the whole water column is moving, not just the surface. Tsunamis can strike any ocean shoreline.

If you are on the beach or in low coastal areas, you may not have much time to seek higher ground. The tsunami danger period can last several hours as the waves move onto land, recede, and return. The second and third waves have been known to be more devastating than the first.

For additional tsunami information, listen to local news reports or visit the Andersen AFB website ([www.andersen.af.mil](http://www.andersen.af.mil)), Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/36WGPA](http://www.facebook.com/36WGPA)), and the NOAA/National Weather Service's website ([tsunami.gov](http://tsunami.gov)).

Tune in to Channel 98--Docomo and Channel 22--GTA on base for weather updates.  
See: <https://ghs.guam.gov/resources/territory-plans> for emergency management plans.

**Be aware of the signs of a tsunami:**

1. A strong earthquake lasting 20 seconds or more near the coast.
2. A noticeable rapid rise or fall in coastal waters.
3. A loud roaring noise from the ocean.

If you suspect a potential tsunami, move to your designated assembly area or proceed inland and uphill.

**What to do during a tsunami watch:**

1. Use a NOAA Weather Radio or listen to local radio or television stations for updated information.
2. Locate loved-ones and review evacuation plans. Be ready to move quickly if a tsunami warning is issued.
3. Tsunamis produce strong currents or waves dangerous to those in or near the water. Local officials may close beaches, evacuate harbors and marinas, and ask ships to reposition to deep water. Obey their directions.

**What to do during a tsunami warning:**

1. If you hear a tsunami warning siren or suspect a tsunami at your location, leave the area immediately.
2. Offer assistance to those who may need help evacuating the area.
3. Bring pets with you to keep them safe.
4. Take your disaster supply kit.
5. Move to higher ground as far inland as possible.
6. Keep listening to the NOAA Weather Radio, local radio, or TV for the latest updates.

**What to do after a tsunami:**

1. Return home only after local officials tell you it is safe. A tsunami is a series of waves that may continue for hours. Do not assume that after one wave the danger is over. The next wave may be larger than the first.
2. Stay away from damaged areas so emergency responders can have full access.
3. Stay out of any building that has water around it.
4. Be careful re-entering buildings or homes. Tsunami-driven floodwater may have damaged buildings.

**Tsunami Prep**

1. Know the height of your street above sea level and the distance of your street from the coast. Evacuations may be based on these numbers.
2. Plan evacuation routes from your home, school, workplace, and other frequented locations in tsunami danger area.
3. Find out what the school's evacuation plan.
4. Practice walking evacuation routes.

## **Lightning Safety Tips**

Once a bolt of lightning flashes toward the ground, it strikes the tallest object in a 50-yard radius. It will not “look for” a tall tree that is 100 yards away from you. Don’t be the tallest thing within that 50-yard radius. If you hear thunder, get inside a building or vehicle.

If you are already in an exposed location when the storm hits, your options are limited. Stay as low as you can to avoid being the highest object. Squat down, but do not lay flat. You don’t want your whole body touching the ground if the lightning hits nearby.

If you’re in the woods, avoid the tallest trees; but stay away from clearings that are more than 100 yards across.

You can usually hear thunder 10 miles away. When you see lightning, count the number of seconds until you hear the thunder. Sound travels one mile every 5 seconds. Most experts recommend 30 seconds (6 miles) as the signal for you to stop what you’re doing and get to a safe location.

The typical lightning threat lasts less than an hour. Wait 30 minutes after you see the last lightning bolt or hear thunder before going back to golfing, fishing, or other outdoor activity.

Water does not attract lightning, but it is a good conductor. Lightning has killed many people who were boating, fishing, swimming, or wading in water.

A car protects you from lightning, because lightning follows its metal structure to the ground. Do not leave the windows down because the lightning can jump into the car through the opening.

# TIPS FOR LIVING ON BASE

## **Giant Voice**

For those of us who have never lived on base, Giant Voice can be a little intimidating at first. Giant voice is a method the bases use to announce important messages to the public.

Here are some basic signals you might hear:

1. A 3 beep indicator signifies an important message is about to play. Giant Voice will clarify if the message is for a base exercise by prefacing each message with: "Exercise, Exercise, Exercise"
2. Natural Disasters: 3 beeps followed by a steady tone.
3. Base under attack by Air or Missile: 3 beeps followed by a wavering tone.
4. Base under attack via Ground Forces: 3 beeps followed by a Bugle call to Arms
5. For weather updates, expect to hear something like, "This is the Command Post with a weather update. Lightening reported within five nautical miles of the air base. Command Post out."

For further information or questions regarding Giant Voice messages, contact the Command Post at 366-2981

## **Reveille, Retreat, And Taps (Monday – Friday Only)**

Reveille (0600) signifies the beginning of the official duty day, and the raising of the flag. When Reveille sounds, military personnel in uniform are to face the flag or the music, if the flag is not visible, and stand at parade rest. At the first note of "To the Colors", they should come to attention and salute. Civilian personnel and members in civilian clothes should face the flag or music and place their hand over their hearts. All vehicles should come to a stop and remain so until the last note is played.

Retreat signifies (1700) the end of the official duty day and the lowering of the flag. Individuals outdoors and in uniform should face the flag or the music, if the flag is not visible, and stand at parade rest during the sounding of Retreat. At the first note of the national anthem, come to attention and salute, holding the position until the last note of the anthem is sounded. Civilian personnel and members in civilian clothes should face the flag or music and place their hand over their hearts. All vehicles should come to a stop and remain so until the last note has ended.

Taps (2200) began as a signal for lights out at the end of the day. For these purposes, there are no formal protocol procedures required. However, the playing of Taps continues to be a part of a military funeral/memorial honors ceremony. Upon hearing Taps at a military ceremony, proper protocol dictates those individuals in uniform render a salute until the music is complete. Civilians should remove their headgear and place their hand over their heart.

### **Commander's Access Channel**

The base Commander's Access channel can be found on channel 98 (Docomo) and channel 22 (GTA). Tune to this channel for updated information on base activities. This is only for on-base cable connections.

### **AAFB Public Web Pages**

AAFB official public webpage is at <http://www.andersen.af.mil/>.

AAFB Facebook page is at <http://www.facebook.com/Andersen36wg/>

### **911**

When calling 911 on base, it is important to tell the operator that you are on Andersen Air Force Base so they can put you in contact with the correct personnel. If you say you are “on base,” they may forward you to the US Navy Base emergency line.