
Group 3 Safety Newsletter

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Winter Flying: It's time to review Cold Weather Procedures in your Pilot's Operating Handbook. Most aircraft are designed to operate within certain temperature extremes. Manufacturers generally can predict their product's performance in temperature extremes and outline precautions to be taken to prevent premature failures. A thorough preflight inspection is especially important during cold weather. It's natural to hurry the inspection when the aircraft is outside in the cold. However, this is the time you should do your best preflight inspection. Here are some things to keep in mind while preparing your aircraft for winter flying:

First, make sure the proper engine oil is being used for the range of temperatures you expect to encounter. Another oil-associated part that deserves attention is the crankcase breather. FAA reports a number of engine failures have been attributed to a frozen crankcase breather line. Pressure builds in the system, sometimes blowing the oil filler cap off or rupturing a case seal, which then allows the loss of the oil supply. The water, which freezes in the breather line, is a natural byproduct of heating and cooling engine parts. How can you tell if the line is frozen during preflight inspection? Simply look at the bottom opening of the line where it comes out of the cowling. If it's frozen shut, this is where it will happen.

Many aircraft are equipped with cabin heater shrouds, which enclose the muffler or portions of the exhaust system. A thorough inspection of this system could reduce your chances of having carbon monoxide enter the cabin. Carbon monoxide detectors are cheap insurance against this insidious killer.

Cold temperatures can also set you up by contaminating your fuel with water. Most pumping facilities are equipped with good filtration equipment but, even with the best fuel and precautions, you can get water in your fuel. If your aircraft has been warm and then is parked in the cold with half-empty tanks, the possibility exists that water will condense in the tanks. Keep your tanks full and your fuel sumps drained. Also, check your fuel vents for ice or snow. A plugged vent can cause the engine to quit or a tank to collapse.

Remember, it's better to suffer through a cold preflight than to suffer equipment failure while you're flying. For more information on winter flying, visit this FAA website:

<http://www2.faa.gov/ats/afss/newyork/WINTER-T.HTM#TOC>

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Identity Theft: Identity theft can be thought of as *a crime in which someone wrongfully obtains and uses another person's personal data in some way that involves fraud or deception*. This can be as simple as the unauthorized use of a person's credit card up to and including taking out loans or getting a driver's license in someone else's name. How does this happen? The possible ways that someone obtains the information required to commit this crime can be endless. Sometimes it is just the bad luck of the victim losing their wallet and having the wrong person find it. Other times it could be someone listening in on the victim's giving their credit card number over the phone or even going through someone's mail or trash.

This is a very relevant issue for CAP. Recall that until recently all CAP ID #s were social security numbers. How many files have this written on them next to the member's name? In addition, most pilot's licenses use their social security number as a license number unless they proactively changed it. Are these records stored in a location that is restricted access to only those that require access? For those squadrons that share facilities with other entities or use someone else's space, what prevents them from accessing the files?

What can you do to protect your squadrons from identity theft?

- Keep all personnel records under lock and key and restrict access to those that need it
- Remove all old CAP ID#s from the outside of personnel folders
- Pick up your mail frequently if it isn't kept in a secured location such as a PO Box
- Protect your trash. Now that we all recycle, someone would be less hesitant to go through your trash looking for old checks, deposit slips, pre-approved credit card authorizations, or anything else with personal information on it

What can you do to protect yourself from identity theft?

- Protect your Social Security and credit card numbers and other personal information including such facts as your mother's maiden name
- Minimize the damage if you lose your wallet by limiting the information you carry.
- Protect your incoming and outgoing mail. Many of your bills have your personal information all over them.
- Review your credit report at least once a year. Look for anything unusual including who has requested your credit report.
- Pay attention to your bank and credit card statements. If something isn't quite right, call and ask.

**The Group 3 Safety Newsletter is a publication of the Group 3 Safety Section.
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