



In the span of eight days, two Soldiers were killed in separate accidents involving small arms. Their deaths need not have happened.

One incident occurred while a Soldier was cleaning his rifle. After reassembling it, he performed a function check on the SEMI position, which failed. He then did the check on BURST and the rifle discharged three rounds, killing another Soldier.

In the other incident, a Soldier cleared his shotgun without using a clearing barrel. The shotgun discharged, striking a Soldier in her abdomen, killing her.

Unfortunately, these aren't isolated incidents. In 2008-2009, the Army reported 38 accidental weapon discharges that resulted in six deaths and 33 injuries.

NONE OF THESE DISCHARGES WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF SOLDIERS HAD REMEMBERED THESE FIVE RULES, THE **THINK** RULES...



- Treat every weapon as if it's loaded.
- Handle every weapon with care.
- Identify the target before you fire.
- Never point a weapon at anything you don't intend to shoot.
- Keep the weapon on safe and your finger off the trigger until you intend to fire.

During training and Sergeant's Time, commanders and senior NCOs should stress the importance of weapons safety and the proper procedure for clearing a weapon. They should also stress the best source for exactly how to clear a weapon is the weapon's -10 TM.

Every Soldier should watch for and correct unsafe weapons handling. When it comes to handling your weapon, remember to **THINK**.