A Quick Guide to OPSEC

What is OPSEC?

OPSEC is keeping potential adversaries from discovering our critical information. As the name suggests, it protects our operations – planned, in progress and those completed. Success depends on secrecy and surprise, so the military can accomplish the mission quicker and with less risk. Enemies of freedom want our information, and they're not just after the military member to get it. They want you, the family member.

What Does it Teach You?

-Look at your daily activities from an enemies' point of view -Understand what an enemy might know about you and your family
-Assess the amount of risk this places on you and your family
-Develop and apply countermeasures, which are ways of preventing enemies from gaining your sensitive information.

Limit What You Say About:

-Military movements (deployment/redeployment dates, dates of field exercises, flight information etc.)... next Tuesday IS a specific date.
-Any issues with the unit
-Anything concerning security
-Equipment issues (what, no flak vests?)
-Locations of units (it's OK to say they're in Iraq, but not to say that your spouses battalion is at 14th and Ramadan in Kadamiyah)

Watch What You Say When You're at:

-Clubs/Bars
-Restaurants
-Gyms
-Shopping
-Public transportation
-Basically anywhere someone you don't know could be listening

OPSEC Measures You Should Practice Daily:

-Be aware of your surroundings
-Keep sensitive discussions in designated secure areas   -Keep a need-to-know attitude (if they don't need to know, don't tell them)
-Safeguard sensitive but unclassified information

Some Other Things to Keep in Mind:

-Make sure that your family knows that the information you tell them is to stay between you and them.
-Limit what you say on telephones. Whether they're land lines, cordless or cell phones they can all be "tapped".
-Censor what you put in e-mails. Anything sent out on the Internet can be seen by anyone on the Internet.
-Limit what you say out in public. You never know who is trying to listen in on your conversations.