

I've been using Triage Lights going on about two years now and I can honestly say they are the one piece of gear that I pack all the time, every time, no matter what I am doing. Whether it's in the field or on my mountain bike the incredibly long a battery life and multitude of uses makes it one of the most valuable pieces of gear that I throw in my bag. Their two greatest characteristics are they are super light and compact which make them perfect in so many situations.

The everyday Army uses chemlights on a regular basis. Sometimes they are hard to get. On my last deployment we were deployed with a SOF element and the only way to reach our VSP was by Helicopter. As you can imagine, this makes supplies hard to get and infrequent. So when supplies ran low, you had to make due and get creative. I had bought one of the compass lights from Southwest Synergistic Solutions and received a triage light to try out. I was hooked from the moment I hit the button to turn it on. The compact lights are tough as nails and stupid simple to use. I have compiled a short list of "tasks" I have used them for and it's only a short list.

- Triage lights for CCP
- CCP Markings
- IFF light for personnel
- IFF light for vehicles
- Cleared Room/Building ID
- Personal light for Reading Maps
- Lighting for inside Vehicle
- Setup LZ/DZ for Helicopters
- Link-Up Site Markings
- Marker Light for Convoy Operations
- Cache Marker Light

Obviously their initial design as a natural disaster aid in finding people is a great application for these lights. But a great crossover for these lights is the triage in casualties during military operations. They already have the four colors needed for triage and the ability to lock them out keeps casualties from accidentally changing them. The greatest asset to the Army with this is the fiscal responsibility in this case. Chemlights are about \$1.50 per light. Normal Soldiers open, break, and use chemlights like they are candy. Wasting in my opinion hundreds if not thousands of dollars needlessly. With the use of Triage lights, the ability to last for days, one light can equal dozens of chemlights. This would equal enormous savings in a units budget.

The numerous combinations of lights and ability to program the lights give them so many more options for use. The IR enabled lights can be put on IR mode to be an IFF marker, then converted into a triage light, or can be changed to designate that vehicle as the CASEVAC Vehicle. The different number of available lights also means that not as many lights are need to be carried. Say for example you were clearing a section of a village and you were marking buildings as you clear them. If the building is cleared your SOP is to mark it green, if the building has weapons or intelligence it could be that it is marked blue. If the PSG has designated a CCP for your area you can mark it Red. So instead of having 20 chemlights per Soldier of different colors, you could effectively carry 5 or 6 triage lights per Soldier and still have the ability to mark all of these situations. This space and weight saver means you can carry more ammo or mission essential equipment.

A great addition to the triage lights is the magnetic base cap. I used this as a interior light in my GMV. Obviously GMV's are stripped down to be agile and light. So I took a triage light and magnetically stuck it to the room so that when I needed, I could either use the red light to read a map when needed, or use the IR so that I could view it under NVG's. I had also run into a situation where we were working with Afghani Local Police. On the

ground, we could easily ID each other, but to Scout Weapons Teams or ISR assets overhead it is hard to distinguish Blue Forces from Green forces. I took some of the IR capable Triage lights, taped them to the drag handle of my Soldiers Plate carriers and we rolled out the wire. The triage lights worked just as well as the expensive strobes that are usually Army issued and cost nearly \$100. The triage lights battery life was much longer than the strobes, along with the capability to quickly be changed on that Soldier to assess him as a casualty if needed.

Recently after graduation from United States Army Pathfinder School I have realized the absolute perfect application of Triage Lights in the setup of Helicopter Landing Zones, GMRS or VIRS drops. I have been in an Infantry Scout Platoon and we were lucky enough that we were utilized effectively and were able to run out and setup some HLZ's during my 1st deployment. An HLZ marking kit, especially to be setup correctly takes many resources. As light infantry every ounce equals pounds and pounds equal pain. This heavy equipment is added onto the two or three days of food, equipment, radio's and ammo that you a required to pack. A simple IFAK sized pouch can contain enough triage lights to setup and HLZ that will correctly mark an HLZ that will accept up to five A/C. With the simple addition of garden staples to keep the lights in place during the rotor wash, you have a highly functional HLZ kit that adds less than 3 lbs. One of the best features to these lights is the ability to turn them on and off as needed if you need to run a LZ for an extended period. Also, with the incredible battery life they would allow you to set up a GMRS drop zone and it would be able to stay light for up to 3 days under the worst conditions.

I am currently a Ranger Instructor at 5th Ranger Training Battalion and always have these lights on my kit or in my Ruck. We deal with some of the worst conditions on a daily basis, whether it be the poisonous snakes, extreme cold weather, high risk climbing, or just the risk of exposure in an extreme environment I am fully capable to not only triage casualties, but setup an HLZ. They are one of the greatest assets I carry in my pack and I won't ever take them out.

Now that I have talked military they have many civilian applications as well. I do a lot of Singletrack and Cross Country Mountain bike riding. Typically I end up out in the woods riding down narrow trails at high speeds. Knock on wood I have never had an accident myself, but twice I have run across other people that have been hurt on the trail, both times, the triage lights in my pack help guide Emergence Services into our location and quickly got the casualties out. I have used the lights as a simple taillight marker riding down the road at night. I can't stop thinking of uses for these lights. And with the addition of the white lights, I use these during my night rides. I put these up there with the two pieces of Army Gear that are the great pieces of equipment ever made. All my former military guys will appreciate this; the first the poncho liner, never leave home without it: second, the smoking jacket. Now I have triage lights. There will never be a pack or ruck that I take hiking, out on mission, or on a bike trail that won't have a set of triage lights in it.