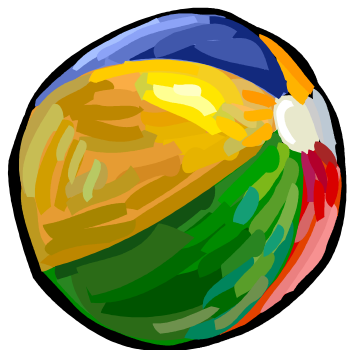




The Summer Safety Guide



Brought to you by the City of Lancaster's
Public Safety Office

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it's positively clear.



Hot Weather

Summertime comes with sunshine, and who *wouldn't* want to enjoy that beautiful weather! However it also comes with high heat...so can you keep your cool?



- Wear lightweight, breathable, loose-fitting clothing. Don't be afraid to wear long sleeves in the sun—they can actually help you keep cool (and prevent sunburn too). And don't forget your hat! Make sure it shades the top of your head *and* your face.
- Make sure to drink plenty of fluids, even more than usual (whether you're exercising or not). Avoid sugary, caffeinated, or alcoholic beverages as these can actually *dehydrate* you. If your doctor has your fluid intake restricted or you're on water pills, ask how much you should drink when it's hot.
- When the temperature starts climbing, stay indoors as much as possible. If you must go outside, try to do it in the early morning or late evening, and limit your time in the heat.
- Stay in a cool, air conditioned environment if you can. Electric fans may feel good, but they don't cool the air, and swamp coolers can only do so much. If

you don't have air conditioning, go to a place that does for a few hours, such as the mall or a library.

Just spending some time in the cool air will help your body keep cooler when you go back outside in the heat.

- Use plenty of sunscreen, even if it's cloudy. This will guard against the nasty sunburn that will ruin your fun for a week (or more), as well as help protect against premature aging and skin cancer. If you go in the water at all, put more sunscreen on after you get out.
- Don't forget your sunglasses! Eyes are just as sensitive to ultraviolet light as your skin. In addition, sunglasses let you see without squinting (at least as much), which will open up your field of vision and make driving and walking safer.

Heat-related illness is not something to be taken lightly. If you've ever suffered from a headache or felt a little sick-to-your-stomach when it's hot out, you've had a heat-related illness. While you might feel better after a little while in a cooler environment, you could just as easily go the *other* way and find yourself in an emergency room. Over the last 30 years, an average of 330 people have died each year from excessive heat exposure—more than earthquakes, lightning, hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods combined—according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Heat exhaustion occurs when a person's heat-elimination systems (i.e., sweating) don't work as efficiently as usual, and their body temperature begins to rise. This is often encountered when a person is exercising (even minimally, such as walking to or from their car) or spends an extended period of time in a hotter and/or more humid environment than they're used to. Signs and symptoms include pale, clammy skin, profuse sweating, muscle cramps and pains, faintness or dizziness, headache, weakness, thirst, nausea, and elevated body temperature (up to 104°F). If left untreated chest pain, shortness of breath, vomiting, and loss of consciousness can occur. Heat exhaustion can also easily cross over into heat stroke if not treated quickly.

Mild to moderate heat exhaustion can be treated by moving the person to a cool, shaded area, loosening or removing their clothes, giving them cool water or sports drinks and salty snacks (if they can tolerate it), and applying cool water to their skin. Do not use an alcohol rub to help speed evaporation from the skin, and do not give caffeinated or alcoholic drinks. If the person begins complaining of chest pain or shortness of breath, they cannot keep fluids down, or they lose consciousness, immediately seek professional medical care.

Heat stroke is a severe, life-threatening condition. It can come on suddenly or develop from heat exhaustion. With heat stroke, the body's heat-elimination systems stop working altogether and the body temperature goes dangerously high, potentially causing seizures, nerve damage, organ damage, brain damage, and even death. Signs and symptoms include hot, dry skin (which may be slightly damp at first if the person has just stopped sweating), body temperature above 104°F, altered mental state (confusion, delirium, hallucinations, dizziness, etc.) or unconsciousness, and possibly hyperventilation.

Heat stroke requires emergency medical care (call 911), but there are some things you can do to help while you wait for the ambulance. If the person is conscious and there is someone who can stay with them, put the person in a cool (NOT cold) bath; otherwise move them to a cool, shaded area (preferably with air conditioning) and use a fan and a damp cloth or fine mist of water to cool their skin. If the person has a normal mental state and can tolerate it, you may give *small* amounts of plain water only.

At the Beach

Beaches are a favorite place to visit on a beautiful summer day. Sun, sand, and surf are a perfect recipe for fun, but only if you know how to do it safely.

- Always wear shoes or sandals when walking across the beach to or from your car, the restroom, or anywhere else, especially on the upper part of the beach (away from the water). Broken glass, seashells, small pieces of wood, rocks, and more can cut your feet (sometimes severely) and easily introduce infections. Consider wearing water shoes in the water for the same reason.
- Don't forget your sunscreen! Apply it liberally and often, even if it's cloudy, and use one rated at least SPF 15 (higher for young children and the elderly, and anyone with an increased sensitivity to sunlight due to illness or medications).
- If you begin to develop a sunburn, get out of the sun and into a shaded area as soon as possible, to keep your burn from getting any worse than it already is.
- Don't let your kids kick sand or splash ocean water at each other. Sand can easily get into eyes, noses, mouths, and ears, and ocean water contains high concentrations of salt and dirt. Should either one get into a person's eyes discomfort, scratches, abrasions, and even possibly infections or blindness can occur.
- When in the water, always be aware of where you are. Keep track of your "spot" on the beach, as it's easy to get swept several hundred feet or yards up or down the coastline by the current. Don't go out further than you can reasonably and easily swim, especially later in the day as you become fatigued. Always watch out for rip tides too, which can drag you much further out to sea than intended or even pull you under. If lifeguards recommend against going in the water, *don't go in*.
- Younger children and others whose swimming skills are not as strong should never go out further than where the water is waist high and they can still touch the bottom.
- If you decide to surf or use a boogie board, use the wrist strap attached to it. Not only will this keep your board from getting lost should you fall off, but the buoyant board can help keep you from getting sucked too far underwater if you get hit by a particularly nasty wave.
- Speaking of waves, be careful! Swells themselves



Treating a sunburn

Everyone knows that sunburns are no fun. Luckily, most can be easily treated at home. If your sunburn has blisters or white spots, seek professional medical attention as soon as possible as these indicate a more serious burn (second degree).

- Keep the burn clean; don't put any salves or ointments on it. Keep it uncovered as much as possible—if you must wear clothing over it (such as on your back) keep it as loose and light as you can. For particularly painful burns, you may apply a numbing lidocaine spray (available at most drugstores).
- To make things more comfortable, you may keep the burn cool and moist by applying a light mist of water to it.
- Don't scratch! Itching is good—it indicates healing. However, scratching will not only cause your burn to temporarily hurt worse, but may break the damaged, fragile skin and open your burn up to infection.
- If your burn doesn't start to heal in a few days, or if it gets worse (starts to get redder or blistered, has increased pain and sensitivity to touch, seems to spread, begins oozing or gets "sticky," etc.), seek professional medical care as soon as possible, as it may have become infected.
- After a few days and as your burn begins healing, you may apply a light coat of lotion or moisturizer every few hours to keep the damaged skin from drying out too much. Incidentally, this may also reduce the amount of "peeling" that commonly occurs with sunburns.
- Finally, and quite possibly most importantly, *stay out of the sun*. Sun exposure will make your burn worse or give you an additional sunburn on another part of your body. Putting sunscreen on a burn is not only *not* a good idea (see the first tip above), but the already-damaged area will get worse much more quickly than healthy skin.

aren't necessarily bad news, but large breakers can be, particularly for boogie boarders and inexperienced swimmers. Also, the larger the waves, the stronger the rip tide in between as more water gets sucked out to help create a big wave going in. If the waves get to be more than you can easily manage, move closer to shore or get out of the water entirely.

- Pay attention to the lifeguards. Changing tides and winds can very rapidly change the nature of the water, and what was once a gentle current can suddenly turn into a dangerous situation. If the lifeguards tell you to come in to shore, *do it*.

Backyard Barbeques

The weather's great, the days are long, and the time is right to do a little barbequing. Just remember to cook the burgers—and not your hands!



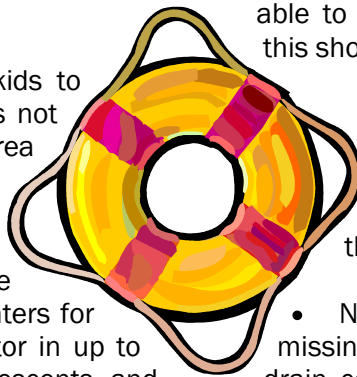
- Always use barbeques in well-ventilated areas, and NEVER use them indoors, or in garages, vehicles, tents, porches, or other semi-enclosed areas. Both propane and charcoal give off carbon monoxide as they burn, an odorless and colorless gas that can kill.
- Set your barbeque up at least ten feet away from any walls, fences, trees, awnings or other overhangs, etc., and always have it on a sturdy, level, non-flammable surface (such as a concrete pad or hard-pack dirt). Have a fire extinguisher or garden hose nearby and ready in case you need it.
- Always inspect your barbeque for cracks, brittle or burnt-through areas, or other damage before starting your fire. If using propane, also check for leaks and blockages, and make sure all the connections are tight. If your grill is damaged, don't use it.
- When using propane, make sure to open the valve on the tank enough to get your fire going, but don't open it full-blast. Always keep the lid open when starting your grill. If the sparker (if you have an electronic or push-button starter) or your lighter don't get the fire going right away, turn off the propane, wait a few moments and fan away the propane, then try again. Don't let a cloud of propane build up—and then explode in a fireball when it suddenly ignites. If it continues to fail to ignite, check to see if there's fuel in the tank; if there is, don't use the grill until it is repaired.
- For charcoal, never use more lighter fluid than recommended. Not only will the extra fluid not do anything to help get and keep your fire going, but lighter fluid burns hot and big—making flames that are much larger than you may be anticipating and potentially burning your hands or face.
- NEVER add lighter fluid to an already-lit fire or to embers as the flames could flashback up to the container, causing it to explode in your hands.
- Don't use fire starter "sticks" or blocks to light a fire for cooking food, as these contain resins and other compounds that will stick to your food as they burn off. Many of these compounds, while safe for fireplaces and campfires, are toxic if ingested through food.
- ALWAYS keep a close eye on your grill; NEVER leave it unattended. Dripping grease or fat can cause dangerous flare-ups, and wind gusts can knock a grill over, creating a very dangerous situation.
- If grilling anything on wooden skewers, always make sure to soak the skewers in water for at least 20-30 minutes (an hour is better) before assembling them, to keep them from catching fire when they're on the grill (and putting the flames on the wrong side of the grate).
- Don't drink alcoholic beverages before or while grilling—an intoxicated cook is an unsafe cook. Also keep all alcoholic beverages and marinades containing alcohol away from the grill when they're not actively being used, as they are flammable.
- Make sure to keep children and pets away from a grill while it is lit and until it is completely cool, to keep them from getting burned or from knocking it over. A chalk line drawn around the grilling area is a good visual boundary for kids.
- Always ensure that your food is thoroughly cooked before serving, to avoid potential food-borne illness. Use a food thermometer if necessary. Burgers should not be pink in the middle, while pork and chicken should be opaque all the way through and the juices clear. For steaks, keep in mind that the rarer the steak, the greater the chance of food-borne illness.
- When you're done grilling, allow the grill to cool completely before putting it away. Shut off propane both at the grill AND at the tank, and allow coals to go completely out. When the coals are cool, empty them into a heat-proof container and douse with water just to be sure, to prevent unintentional flare-ups. While the grill is cooling is a good time to clean it too, to remove build-up of grease and fat that can flare-up the next time you barbeque.



Pools & Spas

On a hot day nothing feels better than spending time in a nice, cool swimming pool, and in the evening a good, relaxing soak in a hot tub can feel wonderful. Follow some basic safety tips though, and don't let your fun and relaxation turn into a nightmare.

- Keep the gate to your pool locked whenever it's not in use. If you don't have a pool fence, don't allow children into the yard without supervision from a sober adult. If your home forms one side of the pool fence, keep the door into the pool area locked when no one's outside to supervise, and consider installing an alarm on that door to alert you when the door is opened.
- For above-ground pools, keep all steps and ladders securely stored whenever the pool is not in use, even if you have a pool fence.
- Keep a heavy cover (too heavy for kids to move) over your hot tub whenever it's not in use, or keep kids out of the area altogether.
- Remember: alcohol and water don't mix. If you're not sober, stay out of the pool or hot tub. According to the Centers for Disease Control, alcohol use is a factor in up to half of all drowning deaths in adolescents and adults. Alcohol use impairs your balance, coordination, and judgement. In addition, falling asleep while you're intoxicated is a very real possibility in a relaxing hot tub, which can lead to dangerous overheating even if you don't drown.
- Hot tubs feel nice when they're piping hot, but never set a hot tub above 104°F to prevent accidental scalding. Children ages 14 and up should only use a hot tub with adult supervision, and children under 14 years of age should never be allowed in a hot tub as their bodies are more sensitive to the heat.
- Always keep a close eye on kids in the pool, even those who can swim, and be *in the water* with the younger ones who have limited or no swimming ability (don't depend on their "floaties" to keep them 100% safe). When younger kids are in the pool, don't allow older kids (or adults) to be overly rowdy, such as by doing cannonballs or splashing.
- If you're using a pool or spa during the day, make sure to use plenty of sunscreen and reapply it often, even if it's cloudy. The water will magnify the ultraviolet rays on your skin, leading to faster and more severe sunburns.
- NEVER allow anyone to run near or around the pool, even when the ground's dry, to help prevent trips and falls leading to unintended dunks in the pool. Someone caught off-guard might try to breath at the wrong time and take in a lungful of water, and head injuries sustained during a fall can knock a person unconscious—rendering them unable to come back to the surface on their own.
- Review or learn rescue breathing and CPR skills, so that if someone should begin to drown you'll be able to help. ALWAYS call 911 if something like this should ever occur.
- NEVER allow anyone, including yourself, to use a pool or hot tub alone—someone who's alone won't be able to get help if they should get into trouble while in the water.
- Never use a pool or spa with a broken or missing drain cover. Always be sure that an intact drain cover is in place. Newer drain covers are dome-shaped instead of flat, to help prevent entrapment against the drain caused by suction.
- Clearly mark the location of your pump shut-off switch, and use it if anyone gets trapped against the drain. Don't try to pull a person away from the suction, but rather pry a hand between the person and the drain to break the seal.
- Consider installing a Safety Vacuum Release System (SVRS), which will detect if a drain is blocked and automatically shut off the pumps.
- Never allow anyone to stick anything into a pool or spa drain or water jet. Foreign objects can clog drains and damage equipment, and items that get lodged in jets may suddenly shoot out forcibly and cause injury.
- Keep rescue equipment, such as a long-reach tow pole and a life buoy with a tow rope, near the pool at all times. Consider installing a phone in the pool area, or bring a portable one with you.
- If someone goes missing, particularly a young child, check the pool or spa first—seconds count in drownings.



Watersports

It's a beautiful day to be out on the lake! Watercraft present their own hazards though, so be prepared to prevent the worst.



- ALWAYS inspect your watercraft thoroughly before using it each time. Repair any damage found before taking it out on the water.
- Take a boating safety class before taking your boat out on the water. The CDC reports that up to 70% of boating fatalities occur on boats where the pilot has not taken such a class.
- File a float plan. Similar to a flight plan, a float plan provides details about where and when you're launching, where and when you're landing, and where you'll be in-between. Give your float plan to a responsible, reliable person who will notify authorities if you are overdue at dock, or leave it with the dock operator. Float plans should be filed whether you're going out to sea or just out on the lake.
- When boating or using personal watercraft, make sure to have a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life vest for each person, and have them wear it. Also make sure to have rescue equipment aboard your boat, such as life buoys and tow ropes.
- For smaller boats, have oars on board to get back to shore, in case you run out of fuel or your motor quits (this may not be practical for larger boats so have an appropriate back-up plan).
- Just like when driving a car on a street, have a designated driver for your boat if there will be alcohol onboard. Don't allow anyone who's had any alcohol to pilot a boat or personal watercraft. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that alcohol is the number one factor in fatal boating accidents.
- It is strongly recommended that you do not allow *anyone* onboard to consume alcohol, either while onboard or pre-launch. Intoxicated passengers are much more likely to put themselves into dangerous positions such as sitting on gunwales, and also tend to stand up or move around the boat while the boat is in motion, greatly increasing their chances of falling overboard.
- Watch your speed and your path of travel when piloting a boat or personal watercraft to prevent collisions with other watercraft or objects. Remember, watercraft don't have brakes, and they can't turn on a dime. If you do have an accident, remember to report it as required under federal law (just like with vehicle accidents under state law).
- If you plan on going in the water while you're out on the lake (or out to sea), turn the boat's motor off before jumping in. Deadly carbon monoxide fumes can accumulate around an idling motor, and the spinning propeller can cause major injuries or death if a swimmer gets too close. If the boat's motor must be on, such as for waterskiing, idle the boat in place while the skier jumps off (AWAY from the motor) and until he or she swims clear.
- Always use caution when casting a fishing line, whether out on the water or dry land. Know who's behind you and to either side of you before casting, and be careful not to let out too much line behind you. You want to catch a fish, not your buddy.
- If a fishing line gets tangled in the boat's propeller, STOP THE BOAT and cut off the motor to prevent mechanical damage. Wait until the propeller has stopped spinning, then completely disentangle the line (cutting it if necessary) before starting the motor back up.
- Review or learn basic first aid and CPR skills before fishing or going out on the water, so that if a person should get caught on a fishhook (or worse) you'll know what to do until you get back to shore.
- Have a CB or other radio aboard your boat, so that should you need to request assistance of any kind you can. Cell phones may not get signal out on the water, though satellite phones are a usable (but expensive) alternative.
- Know the weather conditions, both what is forecast for while you're out and what they actually are before you go out on the water. Wind, rain, and electrical storms can all pose serious hazards for watercraft and their passengers.
- If the weather starts to take a turn for the worse while you're on the water, *turn around and head back to dock*. If the weather clears up you can go back out, but don't take the chance of being caught out on the water in bad weather and not being able to get back.

Hiking & Camping

Sometimes the best things to see are inland, in the hills and flatlands that become ripe with beautiful flowers and amazing wildlife during the summer months. Don't let an accident spoil your view!

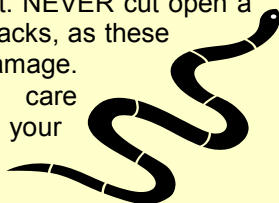


- When deciding to go hiking, plan your route so that you'll be aware of what natural elements and hazards you're likely to encounter (such as cliff faces and waterways). Give a copy of your planned route to a reliable, responsible person who can notify authorities if you don't come back when expected.
- Never hike alone! If something should happen, not only can the other person provide assistance, but they can go to get help if needed.
- Dress appropriately. Wear sturdy closed-toe shoes, such as good sneakers or hiking boots, and long socks pulled up. Pants and long sleeves also are a good idea. Keeping yourself covered will limit the number and severity of bug bites, scratches, and sunburns that you get while you're out.
- Take plenty of water with you, even if you're only planning on being out for a short period of time.
- If you're not familiar with the area, take a map with you so that you don't get lost.
- When camping, consider staying at a commercial or government-operated campground, such as at a state beach or county recreation area. These typically have clear, open areas for setting up camp, plenty of recreation such as hiking or swimming in the surrounding areas, and approved firepits. Some even have flush toilets and coin-operated showers. Remember that at both campgrounds and "find-your-own" campsites, cell phones may not have service, so keep that in mind in case you have an emergency while camping.
- Always check the local regulations before building a campfire. Use an approved, pre-built firepit if one is available. Always set up campfires and other sources of open flame (such as campstoves) away from tents, trees, and overhangs. If local authorities advise you against building a fire, the wind is high, or local regulations prohibit it, don't build a fire.
- Make sure to secure all food items in coolers and plastic storage totes whenever you're not using them, and lock the lids (if possible) and keep them in your vehicle, to prevent animals such as rodents or bears from paying you an unwanted visit.
- Citronella candles are an easy way to keep insects and other bugs away from the camp area, but make sure to extinguish them whenever you leave or go inside your tent—NEVER leave a lit candle or torch unattended. As an alternative, use a flameless citronella repellent and spray your tent (only spray your belongings, not the campsite or other items that come with it) with a repellent spray. Use a human-safe insect repellent spray or lotion for yourself to minimize bug bites.
- Also make sure to completely extinguish all campfires, campstoves, and lanterns before going to bed or leaving the campsite.

The trouble with snakes

Rattlesnakes are a common sight from semi-arid Southern California to the Appalachian Mountains, including much of the Angeles National Forest. While they're not the only kind of snake that may be encountered, they are one of the most dangerous you're likely to come across.

- If you see a snake (of any kind) or hear its rattle, slowly and cautiously back away. Snakes are generally more scared of you than you are of them, and will attack if they perceive you as a threat.
- Stick to clear paths. Stay out of the brush, and watch for holes in the ground.
- Remember that snakes are cold-blooded and like to bathe in the sun during the day, so you are more likely to encounter them during the sun's peak hours.
- If you happen to get bitten by a snake, **stay calm**. The more panicked you get, the faster the venom will go through your body. Immediately call or send for help, and try to limit your movement. Put a lightly constricting band (NOT a tourniquet) above and below the bite, but not on both sides of a joint. Keep the bite site below your heart. NEVER cut open a snakebite or apply cold/ice packs, as these can actually worsen tissue damage.
- Seek professional medical care immediately to minimize your chances of severe tissue damage or death.



fireworks

Bang! Pop! Crackle! Fireworks are an American staple during the summer holidays. Make sure you know the dangers so that you can celebrate safely.



- Remember that ALL fireworks, even sparklers, are **illegal** in the City of Lancaster, parts of Palmdale, and all unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. Stiff fines and even possible jail time await those who choose to violate these laws.
- If you choose to use fireworks in an area where it is legal to do so, make sure to use “safe and sane” fireworks (generally, these are ground-based rather than aerial). In most areas where fireworks are legal, these are the only kind that may be purchased without a special permit.
- Always have a bucket of water handy for keeping spent fireworks, and have a garden hose handy as well if possible. Always douse spent fireworks with water to keep them from flaring back up. NEVER try to relight a “dud”, as it may still be active and go off before you’re ready.
- NEVER approach a spent firework until you are sure that it is out, as they can and sometimes do flare back up. NEVER touch a spent firework until it is cool to prevent serious burns.
- Never put a firework on its side if it’s meant to shoot upward (such as ground-based vertical sparkshooters or aerials such as bottle rockets), and NEVER aim a firework at a building or toward people and pets.
- ALWAYS keep a safe distance from fireworks to avoid burns from the sparks. Fireworks burn at very high temperatures, and can easily catch clothing or hair on fire and cause serious burns to skin.
- Never set off fireworks in grassy, hilly, or brush-filled areas, or near fences, trees, or buildings. Always have a flame-proof setting for your fireworks, such as asphalt or a concrete pad.
- Always check the weather report before setting up for your fireworks, and check the weather again right before and during your session. Rain can literally put a damper on your fun, and high or gusting winds can create a dangerous fire hazard as sparks and embers get blown about. NEVER use fireworks under any kind of covering to avoid rain.
- Consider keeping earplugs on hand, especially for younger children whose ears are more sensitive to the loud bangs, cracks, pops, and whistles made by many fireworks.
- NEVER allow any children anywhere near fireworks, even sparklers, and NEVER allow children to light any fireworks.
- Control your pets to keep them from running into harm’s way or even running off as they get spooked by the fireworks. Better still, keep your pets safely confined indoors.
- The safest (and cheapest) thing of all to do is to attend a sanctioned fireworks show open to the public, rather than setting off your own fireworks. Remember, if any fireworks that you set off end up starting a fire, YOU may be held responsible for the cost of putting that fire out.

In 2007, there were an estimated 9,800 fireworks-related injuries treated by hospital emergency rooms, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). While this is a relatively low number compared to the number of fireworks purchased that year, it’s still a number that, had proper safety precautions been taken, could have easily been reduced to a few hundred or less, and it does not take into consideration those people who did not seek emergency medical treatment for their injuries.

The NFPA also reports that July 4th finds more fires reported than on any other day of the year, with half of those fires being reported as caused by fireworks. In

2006 there were approximately 32,600 of these fires, including 1,700 structure fires and 600 vehicle fires. These fires caused 70 civilian injuries, six civilian deaths, and \$34 million in direct property damage.

Even sparklers, which are generally considered harmless, can easily reach temperatures of up to 1,200°F. In fact, in 2007 sparklers caused 22% of reported injuries, more than any other type of fireworks.

Dr. John Hall of the NFPA says, “When things go wrong with fireworks, they go very wrong, very fast, far faster than any fire protection provisions can reliably respond.”



Parties

The longer days and warmer weather make for a perfect setting to have family, friends, and neighbors over for a summer party. Make it a party to remember—for the right reasons!



- If you have stairs in your home, install a baby gate securely at the bottom to prevent babies and toddlers from trying to “sneak” up the stairs. Even if you don’t have kids, one of your guests might. (Baby gates are also good for keeping small dogs out of certain areas.)
- In addition to stairs, keep any kid-unfriendly areas “off-limits” with a physical barrier, such as a baby gate or a locked door. Such areas include (but are not limited to) the kitchen, areas for storing cleaning products or other chemicals, and anywhere that adults are not present.
- Don’t assume that someone is watching the children that may be at your home. If in doubt, be there yourself, *especially* if you have a pool or spa.
- Provide deep ashtrays for smokers who may visit your home, and ask that they use them instead of flicking their cigarette butts away. Make sure that they’re made of an appropriate heat-proof material (such as glass or ceramic). If you have (or might have) children, pets, or asthma sufferers in your home, insist that smokers go outside to light up—not a bad idea even if you don’t, to keep stale smoke from stinking up your upholstery.
- When hosting a party, always check after the guests leave and before you go to bed for smoldering cigarette and cigar butts that might have missed an ashtray, fallen into a couch cushion, etc.
- Wet down cigarette butts before discarding them into a trash can with a lid, to prevent smoldering butts from igniting any paper items inside. Never leave butts where they can be accessible to pets or children; up to 25% of an entire cigarette’s nicotine gets trapped in the butt, which can be very dangerous or even fatal for pets or small children that get ahold of them. In addition, many cigarette filters contain fiberglass, which can pose severe health hazards if ingested.
- This is an excellent time to pick up any discarded beverage containers too, such as cups or bottles that might contain a few drops up to a full cup of alcohol, to prevent pets or early-rising youngsters from getting to them before you.
- Keep non-alcoholic drinks clearly differentiated from alcoholic drinks, such as by using different color or size cups, or leave beverages in their original containers. If you’re serving punch, make the alcoholic punch a different color than the non-alcoholic punch. This will help designated drivers keep from accidentally drinking the wrong drink, and make it easier to monitor youngsters who might try to “sneak” some alcohol into their cup.
- Make sure that any guests who will be drinking have a designated driver or other plan for getting home safely, or offer to let them spend the night.
- Buffet tables are a convenient and easy way to serve food and snacks, especially when you have lots of guests. Make sure to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold, and anything that needs refrigeration (such as leftover enchiladas, chicken wings, onion dip, etc.) should be put away or thrown out after two hours to prevent the growth of illness-causing bacteria.
- If you use chafing dishes to keep your buffet items hot, make sure that they are placed far enough back that the fuel underneath won’t potentially get shaken or knocked off the table, and keep an eye on the flame to ensure it’s not flaring up. NEVER place lit chafing dish fuel on or near flammable items, such as paper decorations or drapes.
- Keep all lighters, matches, and candles out of reach of children and small pets, such as in a locked drawer or in a high cabinet. Insist that any smokers visiting your home keep their materials on their person (instead of in a purse, for example) to keep curious kids from coming across them.
- Ensure that your smoke detectors are in good working order. Check that your emergency exit plan is up-to-date. Make sure your guests know where all the exits are in case a fire or other emergency should arise.
- If you have any party games planned for children, such as a piñata or “pin the tail on the donkey,” make sure that there is adequate adult supervision to avoid injuries. Being hit with the piñata stick can

cause serious injuries, and the thumbtack on a donkey tail can have serious consequences if stuck in the wrong place (including tetanus, permanent blindness if it hits an eye, etc.).

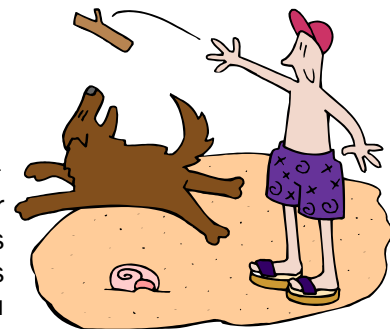
- Remember: anyone responsible for supervising children should be sober.

- **NEVER** shoot a firearm into the air. A firearm is not a substitute for fireworks. A .45 caliber bullet is lethal for up to 1,500 feet, or five football fields. Remember, that bullet has to come down sometime, somewhere—possibly into some unsuspecting person's head.

Pets & Other Animals

People aren't the only ones who may need a little extra help staying safe during the summer!

- Animals can and do get sunburn too! Limit their exposure to the sun just as you would with yourself, and walk dogs during the early morning and late evening hours instead of in the middle of the day. Use sunscreen on your animals if they will be spending extended periods of time in the sun (make sure to use a pet-specific sunscreen—most human sunscreens are unsafe for pets).
- Get to know what your pet looks like when it's healthy so that you can recognize when something is starting to go wrong. Familiarize yourself with the color of their gums, how much they generally pant, how wet their nose usually is, etc. Pets often won't display other visible signs of heat-related and other illnesses until they're severe enough to require veterinary attention (for example, dogs will often continue to play until they're physically incapable of doing any more). Check your pet frequently when spending time outdoors or when it's hot.
- Make sure to provide more water for your pets than usual during the hot months, and check it more frequently. Ice cubes are a great treat in the heat.
- Remember that while dogs have thick, "leathery" pads on their paws (similar to the sole of a shoe), their feet are not injury-proof. Keep this in mind when taking your dog hiking, to the beach, etc.
- It may be tempting to "spoil" your pet with some table scraps from a barbeque or picnic, but remember that many human-safe seasonings and foods are toxic to pets, including sage, onion, garlic, and more, and that many pets cannot properly digest cow's milk and other dairy products.
- **ABSOLUTELY** no bones for pets! Poultry bones are hollow and splinter easily, which can cause a pet to choke. Alternately, the splinters can become embedded in your pet's mouth, or even perforate the intestine if swallowed. Other bones can also be similarly dangerous, so refrain from giving any natural bones to your pets.
- Make sure that your pets have collars with current ID tags on them, so that you can hopefully get them back should they get out. Remember to check the phone number (for example if you've moved or changed cell phone providers in the last several months). Update any tags that are outdated.
- Microchipping is a simple and permanent way to locate your pets should they ever get out and lost. The ASPCA recommends microchipping for all pets. Remember to update the chip registration information if you move, change phone numbers, transfer ownership, etc.
- Alcohol is **NOT** okay for pets, and neither is chocolate. Pets can get alcohol poisoning from just a few sips, and chocolate is toxic, sometimes lethally, to both cats and dogs.
- Keep your trash cans guarded and, if possible, in areas inaccessible to pets. Curious noses can easily lift lids and dig out scraps. If in doubt, place a large, heavy object on top so that your pets can't get inside. Better still, use "pet-proof" containers.
- Make sure to keep any small pieces of trash, such as candy wrappers, off the floor and away from pets' mouths. Pets can easily choke on bits of foil and plastic.
- Check your smoke detectors—often they beep when the batteries run low, at frequencies which can be painful to your pets' ears. If you're not home, they'll be the ones that have to suffer.



Helpful links

American Academy of Pediatrics
<http://www.aap.org/>

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
<http://www.aspca.org>

BoatSafe.com
<http://boatsafe.com/>

California Department of Boating & Waterways
<http://www.dbw.ca.gov/>

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: Extreme Heat
<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/>

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: Have a Safe and Healthy Camping and Hiking Experience
<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/OutdoorSafety/>

Consumer Product Safety Commission
<http://www.cpsc.gov/>

FamilyEducation.com: Barbeque Safety
<http://life.familyeducation.com/safety/foods/36346.html>

National Fire Protection Association
<http://www.nfpa.org/>

National Traffic & Road Closure Information
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/trafficinfo/index.htm>

North Carolina State University: Treating Snake Bites
<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/gaston/Pests/reptiles/snakebitetx.htm>

Pool/Spa Safety & Drowning Prevention
<http://www.poolsafety.gov/>

U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division: Boating Safety Resource Center
<http://www.uscgboating.org/>

U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division: Accident Reporting
http://www.uscgboating.org/safety/accident_reporting.aspx

WebMD: Beach Safety 101
<http://www.webmd.com/parenting/features/beach-safety-101>





Have a fun, happy, and safe summer!!



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it's positively clear.