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DOH-Charlotte Recommendations for a Safe & Healthy Fourth of July Weekend

Prevention tips to keep you and your family safe this holiday weekend



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Charlotte County, Fla.— The Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County (DOH-Charlotte) wants to make sure residents and visitors stay safe this holiday weekend. Whether it is a trip to the beach, an outdoor picnic, a day on the boat, or simply playing outside, follow these tips for a healthy holiday weekend.

Fireworks Safety – Always have adult supervision when lighting fireworks and never let young children play or ignite fireworks. Sparklers burn at temperatures of 2,000°F or more and can cause burns. Never point or throw fireworks at another person. Always keep a bucket of water or garden hose nearby in case of fire or other mishap.

Heat Safety – Never leave anyone in a parked car, including pets. Temperatures can become dangerously high quickly and can be fatal for children or pets. If you see a child or pet left in an unattended car, call 911 and alert authorities.

Water Safety – It is important to remember no matter your age, never swim alone. Use barriers when around water this includes fences, self-closing/self-latching gates, and secure doors with alarms these can help prevent young children from wandering into bodies of water including lakes, pools, ponds, etc. Remember that layers of protection are necessary to prevent drowning. No single device or solution can prevent drownings.

Boating Safety – Never drink alcohol before boating or operating any watercraft. Make sure all passengers wear a life jacket, no matter how good of a swimmer a person may be. Life jackets should be properly fitted for a person's size and weight.

Sun Safety – Seek shade between the hours of 10:00am-4:00pm when the sun is strongest. Wear a broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 15 on all parts of exposed skin and reapply every two hours and after swimming or sweating. Wear a wide-brimmed hat that shades your face, ears, and back of neck. Protect your eyes and the delicate skin around your eyes from sun exposure by wearing sunglasses. Wear light, long-sleeved shirts when possible.

Food Safety – Wash your hands before and after food is prepared. Cook meat, poultry, and seafood thoroughly, and do not cross-contaminate foods. Bacteria can grow quickly on food left out in the heat. Be sure to have a cooler or refrigerator to pack leftovers. Discard leftover meat, chicken, fish, and eggs if left out for an hour or more at temperatures over 90°F.

Bicycle Safety – Brain injury is one of the most serious bicycle injuries. Children must always wear a helmet when they are riding their bicycle. Supervise younger children while riding bicycles to make sure they are safe and out of the way of moving vehicles.

Mosquito Safety – Mosquitoes can be carriers of viruses that may cause a human to become ill. To prevent mosquitoes from ruining holiday fun, remember the 5 Ds:

- Avoid outdoor activity from **Dusk till Dawn**
- Use a bug spray that contains **DEET** or other EPA approved repellants containing picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535.
- **Drain** any standing water
- **Dress** in long pants and long-sleeved shirts

Storm Safety – Remember: when thunder roars, go indoors and immediately get away from ponds, lakes, pools and get off the beach. Find a safe and enclosed shelter. A safe shelter can include a home, office, shopping center, or hard-topped vehicle with windows rolled up. Never use a tree as shelter and avoid open shelters such as a porch or gazebo.

COVID-19 Safety – It is important to remember the COVID-19 remains in our community. If you are feeling sick, stay home. Frequently wash your hands with soap for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water is not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

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