

Summer Safety Tips 2008

School's out, pools are open and people are looking for fun ways to cool down as summer temperatures heat up. As you head to the beach, to the pool, or to the mountains for a camping vacation, we would like to encourage you and your family to keep safety in mind!

Water Safety

- The most basic water safety tip is: Learn to swim! Take some lessons at your local pool. The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim. And always swim with a buddy; never swim alone.
- Swim in supervised areas only
- Obey all rules and posted signs
- Don't mix alcohol and swimming. Alcohol impairs your judgement, balance, and coordination, affects your swimming and diving skills, and reduces your body's ability to stay warm.
- Pay attention to local weather conditions and forecasts. Stop swimming at the first indication of bad weather.

Boating Safety

Whether you're the captain of a schooner or a passenger on a ski boat, following safety guidelines ensures your safety and that of other seafarers.

- Be weather wise:
Sudden wind shifts, lightning flashes and choppy water all can mean a storm is brewing. Bring a portable radio to check weather reports.
- Bring extra gear you may need:
A flashlight, extra batteries, matches, a map of where you are, flares, sun tan lotion, first aid kit, extra sunglasses. Put those that need to be protected in a watertight pouch or a container that floats.
- Tell someone where you're going, who is with you, and how long you'll be away.
- Then check your boat, equipment, boat balance, engine and fuel supply before leaving.

Sun Safety

Summer means fun in the sun! But be safe — don't let a heat-related illness ruin your day. Always drink plenty of water and take frequent breaks when working or playing in the hot weather.

- **For infants under the age of 6 months:** Avoiding sun exposure and dressing infants in lightweight long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and brimmed hats that shade the neck.
- **For Young Children:** Apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outside, and use sunscreen even on cloudy days. The SPF should be at least 15 and protect against UVA and UVB rays.
- **For Older Children:** The first, and best, line of defense against the sun is covering up. Wear a hat with a three-inch brim or a bill facing forward, sunglasses (look for sunglasses that block 99-100% of ultraviolet rays), and cotton clothing with a tight weave.
- Stay in the shade whenever possible, and limit sun exposure during the peak intensity hours - between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

- Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or greater. Be sure to apply enough sunscreen - about one ounce per sitting for a young adult.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or after swimming or sweating.
- Use extra caution near water, snow, and sand as they reflect UV rays and may result in sunburn more quickly.
-

Preventing Heat-Related Illness

- **Dress for the heat.** Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun's energy. It is also a good idea to wear hats or to use an umbrella.
- **Drink water.** Carry water or juice with you and drink continuously even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid alcohol and caffeine, which dehydrate the body.
- **Eat small meals and eat more often.** Avoid foods that are high in protein which increase metabolic heat.
- **Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.**
- **Slow down.** Avoid strenuous activity. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- **Stay indoors when possible.**
- **Take regular breaks** when engaged in physical activity on warm days. Take time out to find a cool place. If you recognize that you, or someone else, is showing the signals of a heat-related illness, stop activity and find a cool place. Remember, have fun, but stay cool!

Hiking and Camping Safety

Many families will head to our national parks and forests this summer to enjoy the great outdoors. But if you're not prepared to rough it in the woods, hiking or camping can be a rough experience. The best way to help guarantee a good time for all is to plan ahead carefully and follow commonsense safety precautions.

- Review the equipment, supplies and skills that you'll need. Consider what emergencies could arise and how you would deal with those situations. What if you got lost, or were unexpectedly confronted by an animal? What if someone became ill or injured? What kind of weather might you encounter?
- Make sure you have the skills you need for your camping or hiking adventure.
- Leave a copy of your itinerary with a responsible person. Include such details as the make, year, and license plate of your car, the equipment you're bringing, the weather you've anticipated and when you plan to return.
- Pack emergency signaling devices, and know ahead of time the location of the nearest telephone or ranger station in case an emergency does occur on your trip.