



Summer Safety – 2018

Every year people look forward to summer vacations, camping, family reunions, picnics, and the Fourth of July. Summertime, however, can also bring severe weather, fires and injuries.

All Norwalk libraries serve as cooling centers. The elderly and small children are especially vulnerable to excessive heat. Those who need to cool off are encouraged to visit any Norwalk library. Going to the movies or mall, or visiting family or friends who have AC is also a great way to stay cool. A heat wave is classified as a period of time lasting at least three days during which temperatures reach at least 90 degrees, according to the National weather service.

Below are more summer safety tips to help you stay safe during the summer months ahead!

Heat Safety

Child Safety Tips

- **Check to make sure seating surfaces and equipment (child safety seat and safety belt buckles) aren't too hot** when securing your child in a safety restraint system in a car that has been parked in the heat.
- **Never leave your child** unattended in a vehicle, even with the windows down.
- **Teach children not to play** in, on, or around cars.
- **Always lock car** doors and trunks – even at home – and keep keys out of children's reach.
- **Always make sure all child passengers have left the car** when you reach your destination. Don't overlook sleeping infants.



Adult Heat Wave Safety Tips

- **Slow down.** Strenuous activities should be reduced, eliminated, or rescheduled to the coolest time of the day. Individuals at risk should stay in the coolest available place, not necessarily indoors.
- **Dress for summer.** Lightweight light-colored clothing reflects heat and sunlight and helps your body maintain normal temperatures.
- **Put less fuel on your inner fires.** Foods (like proteins) that increase metabolic heat production also increase water loss.
- **Drink plenty of water or other non-alcohol fluids.** Your body needs water to keep cool. Drink plenty of fluids even if you don't feel thirsty. Persons who (1) have epilepsy or heart, kidney, or liver disease, (2) are on fluid restrictive diets or (3) have a problem with fluid retention should consult a physician before increasing their consumption of fluids. **Do not drink alcoholic beverages.**
- **Spend more time in air-conditioned places.** Air conditioning in homes and other buildings markedly reduces danger from the heat. If you cannot afford an air conditioner, spending some time each day (during hot weather) in an air-conditioned environment provides some protection.
- **Don't get too much sun.** Sunburn makes the job of cooling down that much more difficult.
- Do not leave your pets in vehicles, the high temperatures are dangerous.
- Check with your physician about storing medications during extreme heat temperatures.

Know These Heat Disorder Symptoms

- **SUNBURN:** Redness and pain. In severe cases swelling of skin, blisters, fever, headaches. First Aid: Ointments for mild cases if blisters appear and do not break. If breaking occurs, apply dry, sterile dressing. Serious, extensive cases should be seen by a physician.
- **HEAT CRAMPS:** Painful spasms usually in muscles of legs and abdomen possible. Heavy sweating. First Aid: Firm pressure on cramping muscles or gentle massage to relieve spasm. Give sips of water. If nausea occurs, discontinue use.
- **HEAT EXHAUSTION:** Heavy sweating, weakness, skin cold, pale and clammy. Pulse is thready and weak. Normal temperature is possible. Fainting and vomiting. First Aid: Get victim out of the sun. Lie down and loosen clothing. Apply cool, wet cloths. Fan or move victim to an air-conditioned room. Give sips of water. If nausea occurs, discontinue use. If vomiting continues, seek immediate medical attention.
- **HEAT STROKE (or sunstroke):** High body temperature (106 degrees Fahrenheit or higher). Hot, dry skin. Rapid and strong pulse. Possible unconsciousness. First Aid: **HEAT STROKE IS A SEVERE MEDICAL EMERGENCY. SUMMON EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE OR GET THE VICTIM TO A HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY. DELAY CAN BE FATAL.** Move the victim to a cooler environment Reduce body temperature with a cold bath or sponging. Use extreme caution. Remove clothing, use fans and air conditioners. If temperature rises again, repeat the process. Do not give fluids. Persons on salt restrictive diets should consult a physician before increasing their salt intake.

Sun Safety Tips

- Protecting your skin from the sun's damaging rays is vital for a many health reasons.
- When possible, avoid outdoor activities during the hours between 10 AM and 4 PM, when the sun's rays are the strongest.
- Always wear a broad-spectrum (protection against both UVA and UVB) sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 15 or higher.
- Be sure to reapply sunscreen frequently, especially after swimming, perspiring heavily or drying off with a towel.
- Wear a hat with a 4-inch brim all around because it protects areas often exposed to the sun, such as the neck, ears, eyes, forehead, nose, and scalp.
- Wear clothing to protect as much skin as possible. Long-sleeved shirts, long pants, or long skirts are the most protective. Dark colors provide more protection than light colors by preventing more UV rays from reaching your skin. A tightly woven fabric provides greater protection than loosely woven fabric.
- To protect your eyes from sun damage, wear sunglasses that block 99 to 100 percent of UVA and UVB radiation.
- Consider wearing cosmetics and lip protectors with an SPF of at least 15 to protect your skin year-round.
- Swimmers should remember to reapply sunscreen regularly. UV rays reflect off water and sand, increasing the intensity of UV radiation.
- Some medications, such as antibiotics, can increase your skin's sensitivity to the sun. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information about the medications you are taking.
- Children need extra protection from the sun. One or two blistering sunburns before the age of 18 dramatically increases the risk of skin cancer. Encourage children to play in the shade, wear protective clothing and apply sunscreen regularly.



Source: American Cancer Society

Severe weather and lightning

- **Watch for Developing Thunderstorms:** Thunderstorms are most likely to develop on spring or summer days but can occur year round. As the sun heats the air, pockets of warmer air start to rise and cumulus clouds form. Continued heating can cause these clouds to grow vertically into towering cumulus clouds, often the first sign of a developing thunderstorm.
- **When to Seek Safe Shelter:** Lightning can strike as far as 10 miles from the area where it is raining. That's about the distance you can hear thunder. **If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance. Seek safe shelter immediately.**
- **Outdoor Activities: Minimize the risk of being struck.** Most lightning deaths and injuries occur in the summer. Where organized outdoor sports activities take place, coaches, camp counselors and other adults must stop activities at the first roar of thunder to ensure everyone has time to get to a large building or enclosed vehicle. Leaders of outdoors events should have a written plan that all staff are aware of and enforce.
- **Indoor Activities:** Inside buildings, stay off corded phones, computers and other electrical equipment that put you in direct contact with electricity. Stay away from pools (indoor or outdoor), tubs, showers and other plumbing. Buy surge suppressors for key equipment. Install ground fault protectors on circuits near water or outdoors. When inside, wait 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder, before going outside again.
- **Helping a Lightning Strike Victim:** Lightning victims do not carry an electrical charge. They are safe to touch, and need urgent medical attention. Cardiac arrest is the immediate cause of death for those who die. Some deaths can be prevented if the victim receives the proper first aid immediately.
- Call 9-1-1 immediately and perform CPR if the person is unresponsive or not breathing.
- Use an Automatic External Defibrillator if one is available.
- Lightning is dangerous. With common sense, you can greatly increase your safety and the safety of those you are with. At the first clap of thunder, go to a large building or fully enclosed vehicle and wait 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder before you to go back outside.
- **When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors**



Outdoor Food Safety Tips

- Whether on vacation or enjoying an outdoor activity such as backpacking or camping, if the food you bring with you is handled improperly, foodborne illness may ruin your trip. Here are some tips for making your next trip safer.
- Keep Hot Foods Hot and Cold Foods Cold**
- Between 40 degrees Fahrenheit and 140 degrees Fahrenheit is the range in which bacteria can multiply most rapidly – they can reach dangerous levels in as little as two hours. Cook raw meat and poultry products thoroughly to destroy bacteria.
 - If you are traveling with cold foods, bring a cooler with a cold source.
 - Since it is difficult to keep foods hot when traveling, cook foods before leaving home, cool them to less than 40 degrees Fahrenheit, and transport them cold. Cooked foods can then be reheated to 165 degrees Fahrenheit.



Keep it Clean

- Because bacteria can easily spread from one food to the next via dripping juices, hands, or utensils, think ahead to avoid cross-contamination.
- When transporting raw meat, double wrap packages or place them in plastic bags to prevent juices from dripping on to other foods.
- Also, don't use the same platter and utensils for both raw and cooked meats.

A Few Rules to Remember

- Pack safely. Use a cooler or pack foods in a frozen state with a cold source.
- Carry disposable wipes or biodegradable soap for hand and dishwashing.
- Discard all perishable foods if there is no longer ice in the cooler or the gel-packs are no longer frozen.

Pack and Transport Food Safely

- **Keep your food safe from the refrigerator/freezer all the way to the picnic table.**
- **Keep cold food cold.** Place cold food in a cooler with ice or frozen gel packs. Cold food should be stored at **40 degrees Fahrenheit or below** to prevent bacterial growth. Meat, poultry, and seafood may be packed while still frozen so that they stay colder longer.
- **Organize cooler contents.** Consider packing beverages in one cooler and perishable foods in another. That way, as picnickers open and reopen the *beverage* cooler to replenish their drinks, the *perishable foods* won't be exposed to warm outdoor air temperatures.
- **Keep coolers closed.** Once at the picnic site, limit the number of times the cooler is opened as much as you can. This helps to keep the contents cold longer.
- **Don't cross-contaminate.** Be sure to keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood securely wrapped. This keeps their juices from contaminating prepared/cooked foods or foods that will be eaten raw, such as fruits and vegetables.
- **Clean your produce.** Rinse **fresh fruits and vegetables** under running tap water before packing them in the cooler - including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Rub **firm-skinned fruits and vegetables** under running tap water or scrub with a clean vegetable brush while rinsing with running tap water. Dry fruits and vegetables with a clean cloth towel or paper towel. Packaged fruits and vegetables that are labeled "ready-to-eat," "washed," or "triple washed" need not be washed.
- **Platter Warning: Prevent "Cross-Contamination" When Serving** - *Never* reuse a plate or utensils that previously held **raw meat, poultry, or seafood** for serving - unless they've been washed first in hot, soapy water. Otherwise, you can **spread bacteria** from the raw juices to your cooked or ready-to-eat food. This is particularly important to remember when serving cooked.

Safe Grilling Tips

- Grilling and picnicking often go hand-in-hand. And just as with cooking indoors, there are important guidelines that should be followed to ensure that your **grilled food** reaches the table **safely**.
- **Marinate safely.** Marinate foods in the refrigerator - *never* on the kitchen counter or outdoors. In addition, if you plan to use some of the marinade as a sauce on the cooked food, *reserve a portion separately* before adding the raw meat, poultry, or seafood. **Don't reuse marinade.**
- **Cook immediately after "partial cooking."** If you partially cook food to reduce grilling time, do so *immediately before* the food goes on the hot grill.
- **Cook food thoroughly.** When it's time to cook the food, have your food thermometer ready. Always use it to be sure your food is cooked thoroughly.
- **Keep "ready" food hot.** Grilled food can be kept hot until served by moving it to the side of the grill rack, just away from the coals. This keeps it hot but prevents overcooking.
- **Don't reuse platters or utensils.** Using the same platter or utensils that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood allows bacteria from the raw food's juices to spread to the cooked food. Instead, have a clean platter and utensils ready at grill-side to serve your food.



Charcoal Grill Safety Tips

- Although a charcoal grill may not be as potentially explosive as a gas grill, charcoal does produce carbon monoxide (CO) when burned. For this reason never bring your charcoal grill or hibachi into an enclosed area such as your home, vehicle, tents or campers, even with ventilation. Also beware of storing a charcoal grill indoors until the charcoal is completely extinguished, as it will continue to produce CO fumes until then.
- You can see the above warnings on the label of your bag of charcoal. Even so, each year about 30 people die and 100 are injured as a result of carbon monoxide fumes generated by burning charcoal.
- To make sure your next barbecue doesn't go up in flames, the Home Safety Council recommends the following safety tips:
- Designate the grilling area a "No Play Zone" keeping kids and pets well away until grill equipment is completely cool.

- Before using, position your grill at least three feet away from other objects, including the house and any shrubs or bushes.
- Charcoal should be left in the grill until cold to the touch or thoroughly soaked in water before disposal.
- Only use starter fluid made for barbecue grills when starting a fire in a charcoal grill.
- Do not wear loose clothing while cooking.
- Never bring a barbecue grill indoors, or into any unventilated space. This is both a fire and carbon monoxide poisoning hazard.

Propane Grill Safety Tips

Propane Grill Dos:

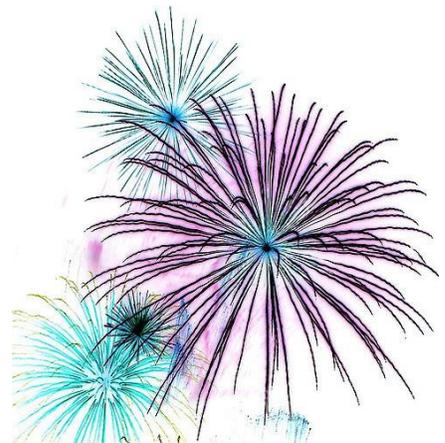
- Always use the grill **outdoors** in a well-ventilated area. **Do not bring propane cylinders indoors or into an enclosed space** such as a garage or basement.
- Always follow all of the manufacturer's instructions and keep written materials and manuals in a safe, accessible place.
- Make sure the grill burner controls are turned off. Keep the cylinder valve closed when not in use.
- Make sure the gas grill is shut off and cooled off before covering your grill after use.
- Always use or store cylinders in an upright, vertical position. Store them **outdoors** away from sources of ignition.
- When you have your cylinder refilled, have your supplier check for dents, damage, rust or leaks.
- After filling, take your cylinder home immediately. Keep your vehicle ventilated with the cylinder valve closed and plugged or capped. **Do not leave the cylinder in your car.**
- When your grill is not in use, cover disconnected hose-end fittings and burner air intakes with small plastic bags, or obtain protective fitting caps from your propane supplier to keep out dirt, insects, and moisture.
- Before lighting your propane gas grill burner, use a leak-detection solution to check all connections for tightness. Contact your local propane gas supplier to obtain the leak-detection solution and instructions on how to use it.
- **Never use matches or lighters to check for leaks.**
- If there is a significant and uncontrollable release of gas or a fire, **call the fire department immediately and move all people and pets away from the unit.**

Propane Grill Don'ts:

- **Do not smoke** while handling the propane cylinder.
- **Do not leave the cylinder in your vehicle.**
- **Do not use matches or lighters to check for leaks.**
- Do not allow children to tamper or play with the cylinder or grill.
- Do not use, store or transport your cylinder where it would be exposed to high temperatures. This includes storing spare cylinders under or near the grill.

Fireworks Safety

- The fire department recommends that you enjoy professional fireworks shows. They are the safest way for your family to see fireworks.
- Remember that no firework is safe and all can cause serious injury.
- Young people suffer the majority of fireworks injuries, so they should never be allowed to light or hold the fireworks.
- Most people feel that sparklers are safe for children to hold, but sparklers burn at several hundred degrees and cause major burns if touched.
- **Never point or throw fireworks at anyone.**
- Keep a water hose and bucket of water close by.
- If your clothes happen to catch on fire, remember to stop, drop & roll to extinguish the flames.



Swimming Safety

- Drowning is a leading cause of home injury deaths, especially for children. Many children drown in pools and spas. It can happen very fast and you won't hear it.
- If you have a pool or spa, install a fence that goes all the way around it. The fence should close and latch by itself. It should be at least five feet high.
- Always keep gates closed and latched. Never prop a gate open.
- When children are in or near the water, an adult should watch them very carefully. Do not take your eyes off them.
- If you have a pool party, have grownups take turns watching the children at all times.
- Enroll non-swimmers in swimming lessons taught by a qualified instructor.
- Never swim alone. Even adults should swim with a buddy.
- Learn how you would save someone in trouble. Learn First Aid and CPR. Make sure that anyone who cares for your children learns CPR.
- Keep poolside rescue equipment and a cordless, water-resistant telephone close to the pool area.
- Post emergency numbers and CPR instructions near the pool area.
- The pump in a pool or spa creates powerful suction at the drain which can trap a swimmer under water. Teach children to stay away from drains, grates, and filters.
- Stay out of the pool or beach waters during severe weather and thunderstorms, especially if lightning is forecast or present.



Driving Safely on Vacation

A driving vacation can be a lot of fun, but don't leave safety and common sense behind. Here are the basics for a safe vacation.

Before You Go

- Check your car or have it serviced before any long trip (battery, tires, belts, and fluids).
- Have a qualified technician check the air conditioner.
- Check your oil. If you will be towing a trailer or boat, or driving in the desert, switch to a motor oil with higher viscosity.
- Pack an emergency kit that includes water, jumper cables, flares, a flashlight, equipment to change a tire, and a first aid kit.
- Fill up your gas tank at night or early in the morning to minimize damage to the ozone layer.
- Make sure your child safety seats and booster seats are properly installed.

On the Road

- Require all occupants to buckle up, with children in the back seat.
- Obey speed limits and all roadway signs.
- Drive calmly and avoid entanglements with aggressive drivers.
- Pack non-perishable snacks and plenty of juice and water (individual water bottles for each family member helps you monitor intake to avoid dehydration).
- Take frequent breaks – at least every two hours – and avoid driving when tired.
- Be especially careful around railroad crossings.
- Avoid driving in the "No Zone" around trucks. If you cannot see the truck driver in the truck's mirror, the truck driver cannot see you.
- Slowdown in work zones, obey all signs and flaggers and pay attention to the vehicle in front of you (most work zone crashes are rear-end collisions due to an inattentive driver).



Touring Your Destination

- Never leave children alone in a car. Do not leave children or pets in a car with the windows rolled up even for a few minutes.
- A sunshade can help keep the car from becoming dangerously hot.
- Cover up seat belts and child safety seats with a towel or blanket while the car is parked (on a hot day, the plastic and metal parts can get hot enough to burn).
- Review safe pedestrian practices with children.
- Taking or renting bikes? Be sure to pack your bike helmets.
- Have a planned meeting site in case someone gets lost.
- Above all - take it easy! Vacations should be enjoyable. If you are tense you are more likely to speed and drive aggressively. If you are tired, you are more likely to make driving errors or fall asleep at the wheel.

