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Celebrate Safely



Each year, fireworks are used around the country to celebrate our nation's independence. But each year, fireworks also contribute to serious injuries including burns, eye injuries and even fatalities.

In Connecticut, all fireworks are illegal with the exception of sparklers and fountains.

Sparklers are defined as non-

explosive, non-aerial devices that contain less than 100 grams of pyrotechnic mixture. Fountains are described as non-explosive, non-aerial devices that contain less than 100 grams of pyrotechnic mixture for each individual item. If two or more fountains are affixed to the same base, the total quantity of pyrotechnic mixture cannot exceed 200 grams. Both sparklers and fountains may be legally used in Connecticut by people ages 16 and older. Novelty items such as party poppers, snakes, smoke devices and anything that emits a flame are not legal for private use in Connecticut.

Along with the risk of serious injury, fireworks bring a risk of damage to property, most commonly in the form of house or grass fires. If a fire or explosion caused by a legal or illegal firework causes injury or property damage, or is found to pose the risk of either, the person responsible could be charged with a felony criminal offense.

The safest way to enjoy fireworks is to attend a public display conducted at a state-approved site by state-licensed pyrotechnicians. Click [here](#) for a schedule of fireworks displays in Connecticut.

If you plan to use legal fireworks at home, please follow the safety tips below provided by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

- Make sure the fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them.
- Only use fireworks outdoors in a clear area and away from buildings and vehicles.
- Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks, including sparklers.
- Never place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse. Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting.
- Light them one at a time and move away quickly.
- Never try to relight or handle malfunctioning fireworks. Soak them with water and throw them away.

Fireworks Fact

Each year, an average of 230 people per day go to the emergency room with fireworks-related injuries in the month around the Fourth of July holiday.

Don't Get Burned

The sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays can damage your skin in as little as 15 minutes. Wearing sunscreen is one of the best ways to protect yourself from the sun's harmful UV rays. The following tips are provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Sunscreen Tips

- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 15 at least 20 minutes before you go outside.
- Re-apply sunscreen every two hours and after swimming, sweating or toweling off.
- Check the sunscreen's expiration date. Sunscreen without an expiration date has a shelf life of no more than three years and is shorter if it has been exposed to high temperatures.
- Some cosmetics and lip balms contain some of the same chemicals as sunscreen. However, if they do not contain at least SPF 15, do not use them as your only source of protection.

UVA vs. UVB Rays

UV radiation is a known carcinogen and can have a number of harmful effects on your skin including skin cancer, premature aging of your skin and cataracts.

UVA rays are not absorbed by the ozone layer and penetrate deep into your skin. UVB rays are partially absorbed by the ozone layer and mostly affect the surface of your skin. UVB rays are the primary cause of sunburn.

What is SPF?

Sunscreens protect your skin by absorbing and/or reflecting UVA/UVB rays. The Sun Protection Factor (SPF) reveals the amount of sunburn protection that a sunscreen can provide an average user when used correctly.

SPF 30 is not twice as protective as SPF 15. When used properly, SPF 15 protects your skin from 93 percent of UVB radiation. The level of protection increases incrementally as the SPF gets higher. For example, SPF 30 provides 97 percent protection.

SPF ratings mainly apply to UVB rays. Many sunscreens include ingredients that also protect against UVA rays. This is known as broad-spectrum sunscreen.

Pool Rules

Swimming in a backyard pool is one of the most effective ways to beat the heat on a hot summer day. With friends and family jumping in and out of the water, all swimmers must be aware of and follow some safety guidelines to ensure a fun and safe swimming experience. The following guidelines are provided by the American Red Cross.

- Surround your pool with a four-foot high fence or barrier with a self-closing, self-latching gate.
- Place a safety cover on your pool when not in use.
- Remove any ladders or steps used for access when not in use.
- Children should be supervised at all times. Stay within reach of younger children.
- Designate a responsible adult to watch the water while others are in the pool.
- Never allow anyone to swim alone.
- Keep your pool clean and clear. Maintain proper chemical levels, circulation and filtration. Test and adjust the chemical levels regularly to minimize the risk of earaches, rashes or more serious diseases.
- Establish and enforce rules and safe behaviors including no diving, swimming with a buddy and no running around the pool deck or patio.
- Ensure everyone in the home knows how to respond to an emergency situation.

Safe Swimming
Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional death in children ages 1-4.

Paws for a Moment



Have you ever stepped on the sidewalk or driveway during the summer without shoes and felt like your feet were on fire? Your pets may feel the same way.

Air temperature is not an accurate indicator of the temperature on asphalt or ground surfaces, which retain heat. When the air temperature is 77 degrees, the asphalt temperature is actually 125 degrees. When the air temperature rises 10 degrees to 87, the asphalt

temperature actually jumps 18 degrees to 143. At 125 degrees, it takes only 60 seconds for skin destruction to occur.

If the pavement feels too hot for your bare feet after about seven or eight seconds, it is too hot for your pet. Be sure to test the asphalt temperature just before you plan to bring your pet outside as it can vary greatly from morning to afternoon to evening.

Watch for the following signs of burn-related injuries on your pet:

- Limping or refusing to walk.
- Licking or chewing of the feet.
- Pads are darker in color.
- Pieces of pads are missing.
- Blisters or redness.

If you are concerned that your pet may have sustained a burn, contact your veterinarian

Office of Environmental Health & Safety
135 College Street, Suite 100, New Haven, CT 06510
Telephone: 203-785-3550 / Fax: 203-785-7588
ehs.yale.edu

Director: Peter Reinhardt

Editor: Dan Champagne

"Safety doesn't happen by accident." - Author Unknown

Grilled to Perfection



In 2014, nearly 17,000 people visited emergency rooms with injuries sustained while grilling, according to the National Fire Protection Association. U.S. Fire Departments also responded to an average of 8,900 home fires annually from 2009-2013 involving grills, hibachis or barbecues. The majority of these accidents occurred from May-August.

Grilling Tips

- Propane and charcoal barbecues should only be used outdoors.
- The grill should be placed well away from your home, deck railings and out from under leaves and overhanging branches.
- Keep children and pets away from the grilling area.
- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat from the grill and catch trays below.
- Never leave your grill unattended.
- If you smell gas, turn off the propane tank and burners. If the leak stops, get your grill serviced by a professional prior to using it again. If the leak continues, call the fire department immediately.

Charcoal Grills

- If you are using a starter fluid, use only a fluid designed for charcoal grills. Never add fluid to a fire that is already burning.
- Keep charcoal fluid out of reach of children and away from heat sources.
- When you are finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before placing them in a metal container.

Tick Safety Reminder

The May edition of the Safety Bulletin contained information on how to prevent tick bites, remove a tick and recognize the symptoms of tickborne illnesses.

Because ticks are most active in the warmer months, we would like to remind you of the importance of knowing how to prevent tick bites.

- Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.
- Use repellents that contain 20 to 30 percent DEET on exposed skin and clothing for protection that lasts up to several hours.
- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors to wash off and more easily find ticks.
- Conduct a full-body tick check using a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body upon return from tick-infested areas. Remember to also check your pets for ticks.

For more information, visit cdc.gov/ticks.