

Summer

Health & Safety



Fourth of July

Fireworks Safety

Fireworks are a Fourth of July tradition, but unsafe use could cause injuries. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), fireworks sent approximately 1,900 people to emergency rooms last year during the 30 days surrounding July 4. CPSC's annual report on fireworks also indicates that an estimated 40 percent of injuries occurred to children younger than 15.

Consumers who decide to purchase legal fireworks should mind these safety tips:

- **Never allow young children to play with or light fireworks**
- **Don't buy fireworks packaged in brown paper.** This indicates the fireworks were made for professional displays and could be dangerous to consumers
- **Always have an adult supervise firework activities**
- **Never place any part of your body directly over fireworks when lighting the fuse.** Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting fireworks
- **Never try to relight or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully**
- **Keep a bucket of water or garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap**
- **Light fireworks one at a time**
- **Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal or glass containers**
- **After fireworks finish burning, douse them with water** from a bucket or hose before throwing them away
- **Make sure fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them**
- **Have a viewing area for children a safe distance from fireworks**
- **Monitor children with sparklers.** A sparkler can burn at up to 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit, hot enough to melt some metals

Protect Your Skin

Protect your skin by reviewing the Sunscreen Application Guidelines from the Skin Cancer Foundation:

- **Use enough sunscreen:** About 1 ounce, enough to fill a shot glass, is the amount needed to cover the exposed areas of the body
- **Apply at the correct time:** Apply sunscreen 15 minutes before going outside
- **Don't forget the little areas!** Sun damage can occur in the smallest exposed areas, such as ears, lips, even the tops and bottoms of your feet. Use a lip balm with at least SPF 30
- **Reapply!** Sunscreens and lip balms should be reapplied often. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends reapplying at least every two hours — more often if you're sweating or toweling off frequently

Summer

Health & Safety



Fourth of July

Family Fitness

The Fourth is an opportunity to spend quality time outside. Incorporate physical activity into your Fourth of July celebration instead of spending all day in your lawn chair.

Walk into town instead of driving to attend Fourth of July festivities. Get together with friends or family for a backyard game of football or baseball, throw around the Frisbee, or go for a walk or bike ride.

Here are some ideas for get-togethers over the Fourth:

- Organize a game of football, baseball, kickball or basketball
- Host a competition: potato sack races, relay races or a water balloon fight
- Run around to catch fireflies with the kids before the fireworks start

Handle Food Safely for Picnics

As you plan your Fourth of July gatherings, put food safety on your checklist.

Cases of foodborne illness normally rise during the summer. Harmful bacteria grow faster in warm temperatures: Most foodborne bacteria grow fastest at temperatures from 90 to 110 F. Bacteria also need moisture to flourish, and Missouri summers are often humid.

There also are “people” causes for the upswing in summertime foodborne illnesses. More people are cooking outside. The safety controls that a kitchen provides — thermostat-controlled cooking, refrigeration, and washing facilities — are often not available, and well-intentioned volunteer cooks don’t necessarily know how to safely prepare, store and serve large quantities of food.

Summer

Health & Safety



Fourth of July

To keep picnickers safe from foodborne illness, the Partnership for Food Safety Education recommends four simple steps to safer food in the summertime.

Clean: Wash Hands and Surfaces Often

Unwashed hands and surfaces are a prime cause of foodborne illness.

- Wash your hands with hot, soapy water before handling food and after using the bathroom, changing diapers and handling pets
- When eating away from home, find out whether there's a source of clean water. If not, bring water for preparation and cleaning. Or pack clean, wet, disposable cloths or moist towelettes and paper towels for cleaning hands and surfaces

Separate: Don't Cross-Contaminate

Cross-contamination during preparation, cooking and serving is a prime cause of foodborne illness.

- Always marinate food in the refrigerator, not on the counter. If some of the marinade is to be used as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a portion of the marinade. Don't put raw meat and poultry in it. Don't reuse the marinade used on raw meat or poultry unless it's boiled first to kill any bacteria
- When packing the cooler, wrap raw meat and poultry securely to prevent juices from coming in contact with ready-to-eat food
- Wash plates, utensils and cutting boards that held the raw meat or poultry before using again. Carry a clean plate out to the grill to hold the cooked food

Cook: Cook to Proper Temperatures

- Food is safely cooked when it reaches the internal temperature needed to kill harmful bacteria. Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often brown quickly on the outside, so check them with a food thermometer to be sure they are cooked thoroughly
- Cook hamburger and other ground meats (veal, lamb and pork) to an internal temperature of 160 F and ground poultry to 165 F
- Beef, veal and lamb steaks and roasts may be cooked to 145 F for medium rare
- Whole poultry should be cooked to 180 F as measured in the thigh; cook breast meat to 170 F
- All cuts of pork should reach 160 F
- Cook meat and poultry completely at the picnic site. Partial cooking ahead of time allows bacteria to multiply to the point that later cooking cannot destroy them

Summer

Health & Safety



Fourth of July

Chill: Refrigerate Promptly

- Holding food at an unsafe temperature is a prime cause of foodborne illness. Keep cold food cold!
- Bacteria multiply rapidly between 40 and 140 F. Never leave food in this “danger zone” more than two hours, one hour in temperatures above 90 F
- Cold perishable food like deli meats, cooked meats, chicken, and potato or pasta salads should be kept in an insulated cooler packed with several inches of ice, frozen gel packs or containers of frozen water
- Keep the cooler in the coolest part of the car, or place in the shade or shelter, out of the sun, whenever possible. Chill drinks in a separate cooler to avoid constantly opening the one holding perishable foods
- Replenish the ice as soon as it starts melting
- If you don't plan to eat take-out food within two hours of purchase, chill the food in your refrigerator before packing for your outing

For additional food safety information about meat, poultry or eggs, call the food safety experts at the (USDA) Meat and Poultry Hotline at 800-535-4555. The toll-free number for the hearing impaired is 800-256-7072. The hotline is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays. Additional food safety information is available online at www.fsis.usda.gov.

Summer

Health & Safety



Bonus - Fourth of July

Best Barbecue Choices

Grandma's potato salad and fried chicken may be hard to resist this Fourth of July. It's okay to indulge with a small amount of your favorite family specialties, but keep serving size in mind.

One serving is ½ cup of fat-laden sides like mayonnaise- or Miracle Whip®-based potato salad, pasta salad or cole slaw, or ice cream and desserts. One piece of dark-meat chicken (thigh, wings and leg), bratwurst, hot dog, or half a fried chicken breast is an appropriate serving size.

You can substitute low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt for mayonnaise in side dishes.

To stay satisfied and healthy at Fourth of July celebrations, load up your plate with lower-calorie items that still taste great:

- Vinaigrette or Italian-dressing based pasta salad, cole slaw or potato salad
- Grilled pork chops, chicken breast, vegetables or flank steak
- Sugar-free gelatin desserts or puddings, low-fat whipped topping, frozen yogurt, fresh fruit, angel food cake and popsicles
- Skip the potato chips and munch on fresh fruits and veggies, or corn chips and salsa
- Use healthier condiments such as salsa, mustard and fresh vegetable toppings

References:

United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. (2012). Fireworks Safety. Retrieved June 14, 2012, from: <http://www.cpsc.gov/info/fireworks/index.html>

Skin Cancer Foundation. (2012). Sunscreens Explained. Retrieved June 14, 2012, from: <http://www.skincancer.org/prevention/sun-protection/sunscreen/sunscreens-explained>

Food and Drug Administration. (2012, May 18). Sun Safety: Save Your Skin. Retrieved June 14, 2012, from: <http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm049090.htm#TipsforApplyingSunscreen>

Source:

United States Department of Agriculture. (2001, June 26). Handle Food Safely for Fourth of July Picnics. Retrieved June 14, 2012, from: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/news/2001/july4.htm>