

Summer Fun Toolkit

Like a well-made gumbo, summer requires three key ingredients: a grill, water, and fireworks.

In this month's toolkit, we'll take a look at how to keep safe while partaking in three of summer's most valued rites of passage. Likely, you have already enjoyed delicious food cooked on the grill, a lit firework during the Memorial Day holiday, and a dip in the pool, ocean, or lake.

To that end, we want you to be safe and enjoy all three activities as safely as possible. Each activity carries its own set of hazards, as anything fun carries some degree of risk. We're here to help you lower your risk and maximize your summer fun.

Additionally, you'll see us citing some of our closest partners throughout: the American Red Cross, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Consumer Product Safety Administration (CPSA), and the National Fire Protection Association. Preparedness, truly, is a humble partnership amongst agencies, organizations, and communities, with the recognition of differing strengths. Credit the best, and you do the rest.

Let's all work together to be safe this summer, and enjoy the fun to its fullest.

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Grilling Safety

Key Messages for Grilling Safety

- July is the peak month for grill fires, with roughly half of injuries resulting in thermal burns (NFPA)
- Seven out of ten adults own a grill, and while that accounts for many tasty meals, it also means an increased risk for accidents (NFPA)

- 10,600 home fires are started by grills each year, with almost 20,000 people per year making a trip to the emergency room due to grilling accidents (NFPA)
- Keep cold food cold, coolers closed, and don't cross-contaminate. Not only can unsafe grilling practices get you hurt, but unsafe food handling can get you sick.

Talking Points for Grilling Safety

Grill Operation

- Only use grills outdoors.
- Grills should be used out in the open, away from homes, deck railings, and from under eaves and branches.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away from a lit grill.
- Remove grease and fat by cleaning your grill after each use. Grease and fat can turn your grill into a tinderbox.
- If you're using a charcoal grill, make sure coals are completely cool before disposing of them. If they're not, they can burn you or burn the product you're using to dispose of them.
- If you're using a propane grill, and you're using it for the first time this season, check hoses and attachments for leaks. If you ever smell gas while you're cooking, turn off both the tank and the grill immediately.
- If you don't feel comfortable using a grill, don't use one! Fire and gas can be dangerous.

Food Safety

(Courtesy of the FDA: [Handling Food Safely While Eating Outdoors | FDA](#))

- Keep cold food cold. Place cold food in a cooler with ice or frozen gel packs. Cold food should be stored at 40°F 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.
- 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.” Partial cooking before grilling is only safe when the partially cooked food can go on the hot grill immediately, for example at a home with a grill on the patio or deck.
- 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. (See Safe Food Temperature Chart)
- 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.
- Check for foreign objects in food. If you clean your grill using a bristle brush, check to make sure that no detached bristles have made their way into grilled food.

Fireworks Safety

Key Messages for Fireworks Safety

- In 2021, U.S. hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated 11,500 people for fireworks related injuries; 32% due to burns, with 67% of injuries occurring to the eyes, head, face, ears, hands, and fingers. These injury estimates were obtained or derived from the Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CSPC) [2021 Annual Fireworks Report \(cpsc.gov\)](https://www.cpsc.gov/2021/01/2021-Annual-Fireworks-Report)
- Most injuries occurred in the month around July 4 (June 18-July 18).

- In that month, 1,500 injuries occurred through the use of fireworks and 1,100 injuries occurred through the use of sparklers.
- Deaths due to fireworks average nine per year between 2006-2021

Talking Points for Fireworks Safety

- The best way to protect your family is not to use fireworks at home - period. The U.S. Fire Administration recommends attending public fireworks displays and leaving the lighting to the professionals.
- If you decide to use fireworks, it is important to ALWAYS follow the instructions and safety tips to reduce your risk.
 - 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 fireworks.
 - Never try to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully.
 - Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
 - Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap.
 - Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
 - Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal or glass containers.
 - After fireworks complete their burning, douse the spent device with plenty of water from a bucket or hose before discarding it to prevent a trash fire.
 - Make sure you know your local laws regarding fireworks.
 - Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks.
 - Avoid buying fireworks that are packaged in brown paper because this is often a sign that the fireworks were made for professional displays and that they could pose a danger to consumers.
 - Always have an adult supervise fireworks activities. Parents don't realize that young children suffer injuries from sparklers. Sparklers burn at temperatures of about 1,200 degrees.
 - Make sure fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them.

Swimming Safety

Key Messages for Swim Safety

(Figures courtesy of the American Red Cross: [Drowning Prevention & Facts | American Red Cross](#))

- Ten people die each day from unintentional drowning, and on average, two of them are under age 14.
- Drowning is responsible for more deaths among children ages one to four than any other cause except birth defects.

- For children younger than 5, 87% of drowning fatalities occur in home pools or hot tubs. Those aged 5-17 are more likely to drown in natural water, like ponds and lakes.
- African-American children ages 5-19 drown in swimming pools at rates 5.5 times higher than those of white children in the same age range.
- 79% of children in households with incomes less than \$50,000 have few-to-no swimming skills.

Talking Points for Swim Safety

(courtesy of: The American Red Cross, [Swimming Safety](#) | [Swim Safe](#) | [American Red Cross](#))

At the pool

- Secure your pool with appropriate barriers.
- Designate a water watcher...and stay in arm's reach of young children.
- Install anti-entrapment drain covers and safety release systems to protect against drain entrapment.
- If a child is missing, check the water first.

At the lake (or stream, or creek, or river)

- Be sure you are water competent for natural environments before swimming – this is not your home pool!
- Always enter unknown or shallow water feet first.
- Watch out for currents, waves, and underwater obstructions – they're not just found in the ocean.

At the ocean

- Always swim in a lifeguarded area.
- Never swim alone, regardless of your age or level of swimming skills.
- Keep within your fitness and swimming capabilities.
- Be aware of weather and water conditions and heed warnings.

News Release Template

ORGANIZATION> is Encouraging Everyone to Practice Summer Fun Safely in 2023

Know the Facts. Know How to Act.

Summer Fun Safety

June 2023

<CITY, St.> – <INSERT ORGANIZATION> is proud to join the Federal Emergency Management Agency ([FEMA](#)) to promote summer fun safety by spreading the word and encouraging <employees or residents> and the rest of the community to learn the facts and taking steps now to prepare. <INSERT ORGANIZATION> is <INSERT EVENT INFORMATION HERE> or <committed to be a leader for emergency preparedness>.

This June, FEMA and the [Ready Campaign](#) will be educating the public on how to stay safe while participating in a few of summer's most fun activities: grill safety, fireworks safety, and swim safety.

Grilling food can produce a delicious meal, but it also has the potential to injure you if it's not done properly. Practice safe grilling tips, like keeping grills away from homes and deck rails, by keeping kids and pets at least three feet away from the grill, and practicing safe food handling.

Swimming is a cool and refreshing activity that the whole family can enjoy, but it also comes with risks and hazards. Always swim supervised, especially kids. Keep a fence or barrier around your pool to limit folks from accessing or falling in unattended. And, when you're at the beach, stay near a lifeguard and follow the rules.

We also want people to learn and practice firework safety, which is extremely important during this time of year. According to the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), 66% of fireworks injuries occur within a month of the July 4 holiday. It is important to know how to use fireworks safely to avoid injury and useless tragedy. Remember, the safest way to enjoy fireworks is to attend a public display conducted by trained professionals!

<INSERT ORGANIZATION> will be raising awareness of how citizens can take steps to stay safe this summer through <INSERT STEPS TAKEN>. <INSERT ORGANIZATION> is committed to helping the whole community to prepare for a safe and fun summer

More information on summer hazards can be found at <INSERT ORGANIZATION WEBSITE>, the American Red Cross water safety website, the Consumer Product Safety Comissions fireworks safety website, the National Fire Safety Association's grill safety website, the Food and Drug Administrations food handling tips website, and [Ready.gov](#) or the Spanish-language web site [Listo.gov](#).

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Social Media

Social Media for grill safety, fireworks safety, and water safety.


Hashtags:

#CelebrateSafely
#FireworksHurt
#SafeSummer
#WaterSafety
#BoatSafety
#SwimSafety
#FireFacts
#grilling

Social Media for Fireworks Safety

- Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks. #FireworksHurt
- Leave fireworks to the pros – do not use consumer fireworks! #FireworkSafety #FireworksHurt
- Sparklers burn at temperatures hot enough to melt some metals. #FireworksHurt #FireworkSafety #TheMoreYouKnow
- The safest way to enjoy #fireworks is to attend a public display conducted by trained pros! #FireworksHurt #FireworkSafety #SafeSummer
- After a #fireworks display, children should never pick up fireworks that may be leftover; they may still be active! #FireworksHurt
- #Didyouknow #Sparklers burn at 1,200 degrees F, hot enough to cause 3rd-degree burns! #FireworkSafety #FireworksHurt #themoreyouknow
- Each July 4, thousands of people, most often kids & teens, are injured while using consumer fireworks #FireworkSafety #FireworksHurt

Social Media for Water Safety (Courtesy of the CDC: [Social Media Library](#) | [Healthy Swimming](#) | [Healthy Water](#) | [CDC](#))

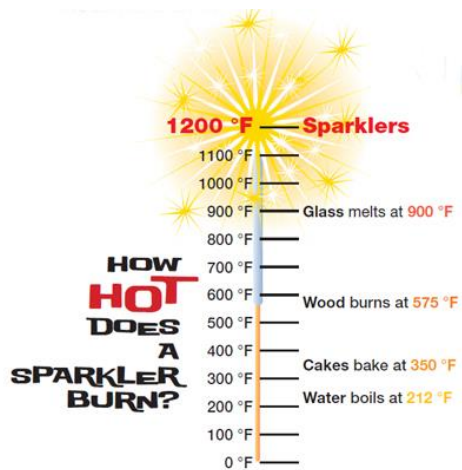
- Every day, about 10 people in the U.S. die from drowning. 2 of the 10 are under the age of 15 years. #WaterSafety
- Drowning kills more kids 1–4 years old than anything else except birth defects. #SwimSafety
- Nearly 80% of people who die from drowning are male. #WaterSafety
- Get the facts about drowning and water safety: <http://go.usa.gov/4wgJ> #WaterSafety
- Learn to swim! Formal swimming lessons in children as young as 1 year old can reduce the risk of drowning. #SwimSafety
- Always supervise children when they are in or around water. #WaterSafety

- Wear a life jacket! Half of all boating deaths could be prevented with the use of life jackets. #BoatSafety

Social Media for Grill Safety (courtesy of the NFPA: [NFPA - Grilling social media posts](#))

- July is the peak month for grilling fires, followed by May, June & August. Stay safe: <http://ow.ly/HyUG300fseQ> #FireFacts
- Safety tip: grills should be placed well away from home/deck railings & out from under eaves & branches <http://ow.ly/kMfq300fumf>
- Read all of NFPA's grilling safety tips & download the free safety tip sheet: <http://ow.ly/lrAl300fszr>
- In this @NFPA video, tips on staying safe when grilling your tasty meals are reviewed. Check it out: <https://youtu.be/65RCHLNiKa8> #grilling
- Want a simple test to check your gas grill for leaks? @NFPA has a great one: <https://youtu.be/mpDhUssEgPO> #grilling
- Fire safety tip: Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from grills & in trays below the grill <http://ow.ly/kMfq300fumf>
- Share this infographic on grilling stats from @NFPA to inform your friends/family/neighbors: <http://ow.ly/gDEi300fv5l>

Images and Graphics



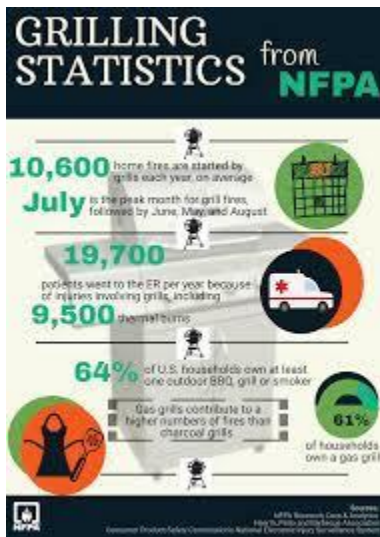
<https://extension.msstate.edu/blog/fireworks-safety-tips>



[Fireworks-Poster-2020.jpg \(2550×3311\) \(cpsc-d8-media-prod.s3.amazonaws.com\)](#)



[Celebrate National Water Safety Month This May : American Red Cross Youth](#)



NFPA - Grilling safety



Food Safety by Events and Seasons | FoodSafety.gov