



Charlie Crist
Governor

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State Surgeon General

PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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June is Home Safety Month **Hands-On for Home Safety**

Summer marks the time for families to enjoy some of America's most traditional pastimes – barbecues, pool parties and backyard gatherings. However, family fun could be interrupted by a trip to the emergency room if you don't follow simple steps to stay safe.

Kids and their friends are home more during the summer, so you want to make sure that your home is prepared for more activity and guests. By being alert and prepared for summertime threats, families are reducing their chances of injuries for their loved ones. The Pinellas County Health Department recommends that you follow these guidelines to keep your family safe this summer.

Grilling Safety

Gas and charcoal grills caused an average of 1,500 structure fires and 4,800 outdoor fires in or on home properties in the U.S. last year. **Here are some safety tips to make sure your next barbecue doesn't go up in flames:**

- Designate the grilling area a "**No Play Zone**," keeping kids and pets far away until grill equipment is completely cool.
- Before using, put your grill at least three feet away from other objects, including your house and any shrubs or bushes.
- Only use starter fluid made for barbecue grills when starting a fire in a charcoal grill. Never use gasoline!
- Before using a gas grill, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line to be sure it is working properly and is not leaking.
- Never use a match to check for leaks. If you detect a leak, immediately turn off the fuel and don't attempt to light the grill again until the leak is fixed.
- Never use a barbecue grill indoors or in any unventilated space. This is both a fire and carbon monoxide poisoning hazard. Carbon monoxide poisoning can lead to death!

Yard Safety

Lawn mowing and landscaping top the list of chores when it comes to preparing for backyard parties and barbecues. The simple act of yard work can have lots of chance to get hurt if you're not careful. **Here are some tips to make sure your backyard doesn't become an injury trap:**

- Wear protective goggles and ear protection while using outdoor machinery to prevent sight and hearing-loss injuries.
- Keep all garden equipment and tools where children cannot reach them.
- Store all sharp tools pointing downward.
- Use gasoline only as a fuel for motors. Store it in a container designed just for gasoline in a shed or garage with a lock.
- Never use gasoline indoors, even in small amounts. Use gasoline outdoors only.

(MORE)



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- Fill mowers and gas-powered tools outside, before starting the job. Re-fuel only after the engine has completely cooled.
- Start mowers outdoors to avoid raising carbon monoxide levels inside your garage.
- Chemicals and fuels (such as gasoline), car fluids (such as anti-freeze), pesticides (such as bug killers) and lawn and garden products (such as fertilizer) are poison. Store them where children cannot see or touch them.
- Close the lid on all dangerous products and put them away after using them. Store them in a safe place with a lock.
- Clear sidewalks and pathways of any toys and clutter to avoid slips and falls.
- Cover the ground under playground equipment with a thick layer (9 to 12 inches) of mulch, wood chips or other safety material.

**For additional information to help you learn more and stay safe in and around your home this summer,
please visit www.homesafetycouncil.org.**

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