

HOMESAFETYMATTERS

SUMMER 2023

SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

Backyard burning, weather and sports among the dangers

Each season presents safety challenges. RLG Special Accounts Group Manager **Nick Walby**, a volunteer Gibsonburg firefighter, says attention needs to be paid during summer activities to keep everyone safe.

“A little bit of forethought and planning goes a long way in keeping yourself and your loved ones safe,” Walby said. “Always think about the potential danger in the activity you are performing and take appropriate safety precautions.”

Walby focused on four areas where people can improve safety:

- When biking or walking, try to stay off main roads as much as possible; walkers should use sidewalks if available. Wearing hi-visibility clothing when cycling or walking helps others see you.
- Summer sports can cause heat exhaustion and dehydration. Check the weather before participating. Hydrate in

MOSQUITO MAYHEM

Tiny airborne pests can be more than a simple seasonal annoyance

Mosquito bites are an itchy, pesky reality when the weather is hot. In most cases, mosquito bites are ultimately harmless: Itchy and irritated skin for a couple days which can be treated with a variety of topical over-the-counter medicines and home remedies such as aloe vera.

But, according to the Cleveland Clinic, more serious symptoms can occur when bitten by a disease-carrying mosquito. Viruses such as Chikungunya, Zika, and West Nile are found in North America.



Know where to go in the event of an emergency and review with your family.

the days leading up to the event, not just the day of. Bring appropriate beverages because some facilities may not have them available. Relax between events if multiple contests are scheduled.

- Never burn on a windy day or when there are exceptionally hot and dry conditions. Utilize a burn barrel and burn only if allowed by local authorities. Notice what is planted in the fields adjacent to where you are burning and move if necessary.
- Be prepared for severe weather such as thunderstorms and tornados. Make sure flashlights have fresh batteries and have a way to hear weather updates if power or a television signal is lost. Know where to go in the event of an emergency and review with family members.

Preventing mosquito bites:

- Eliminate any standing water.
- Use a bug spray registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (typically containing DEET).
- Wear thick clothes, including long pants and long sleeves. Mosquitoes can bite through thin clothes.
- Utilize screens over windows and doors.
- Stay indoors during the highest point of mosquito activity (dusk and dawn).
- Treat clothing, tents and net coverings with chemicals that repel mosquitoes.



FIRST AID KITS

Buy one or make your own: It's essential for home, vehicles

Being prepared is essential for year-round safety, especially in the summer when people are outdoors more often. From bee stings to much more serious injuries, having a good first aid kit can make a big difference in outcomes. The American Red Cross recommends the following in a first aid kit for a family of four:

- 2 absorbent compress dressings (5 x 9 inches).
- 25 adhesive bandages (assorted sizes).
- 1 adhesive cloth tape (10 yards x 1 inch).
- 5 antibiotic ointment packets (approximately 1 gram).
- 5 antiseptic wipe packets.
- 2 packets of aspirin (81 mg each).
- 1 emergency blanket.
- 1 breathing barrier (with one-way valve).
- 1 instant cold compress.
- 2 pair of non-latex gloves (size: large).
- 2 hydrocortisone ointment packets (approximately 1 gram each).
- One 3 in. gauze roll (roller) bandage.
- 1 roller bandage (4 inches wide).
- Five 3 in. x 3 in. sterile gauze pads.
- 5 sterile gauze pads (4 x 4 inches).
- Oral thermometer (non-mercury/non-glass).
- 2 triangular bandages.
- Tweezers.
- Emergency First Aid instructions.



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PUT THE PHONES DOWN OR RISK A TICKET

Beginning Oct. 5, police will issue tickets for cell phone violators

Ohio's new distracted driving law, which took effect April 4, has a six-month grace period in which police will only issue warnings to help educate the public.



Drivers can use navigational devices but more than a single swipe while moving is dangerous.

But on Oct. 5, the penalties become reality:

- 1st offense in two years: 2 points assessed to driver's license, up to a \$150 fine. Completion of a distracted driving course can help avoid the fine and points
- 2nd offense in two years: 3 points assessed to license, up to a \$250 fine.
- 3rd or more offense in two years: 4 points assessed to license, up to a \$500 fine, possible 90-day suspension of driver license.

Fines are doubled if the violation occurs in a work zone.

It is illegal in most cases to use or hold a cell phone or other electronic device in your hand, lap, or other parts of the body

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE SUN

Know which sunscreen to use and how to properly apply it

People who get sunburned usually didn't use enough sunscreen, didn't reapply it after being in the sun or water, or used an expired product.

Your skin is exposed to the sun's harmful UV rays every time you go outside. Sunscreen can protect your skin against skin cancer and premature aging. However, it is not as effective unless it is applied correctly.

Follow these tips from the American Academy of Dermatology Association when applying sunscreen:

- Choose a sunscreen that has an SPF of 30 or higher, is water resistant, and provides broad-spectrum coverage, protecting you from UVA and UVB rays.
- Apply sunscreen before going outdoors.

while driving on Ohio roads. If police see a violation, they can pull you over. Previously, law enforcement could not pull over an adult distracted driver unless that driver also committed another traffic offense. The new law makes distracted driving a primary offense.

Drivers over 18 years old can make or receive calls via hands-free devices, including:

- Speakerphone.
- Earpiece.
- Wireless headset.
- Electronic watch.
- Connecting phone to vehicle.

In most cases, anything more than a single touch or swipe is against the law. More details, including exceptions to the law, are available at PhonesDown.Ohio.gov.



The motorcyclist above is unwisely traveling in a motorist's blind spot. Check your blind spots before changing lanes or making a turn.

'I NEVER SAW IT'

Look for motorcycles during the warm weather riding season

According to the Ohio State Patrol, from 2018 to 2022, 18,980 motorcycle-involved crashes have occurred on Ohio roadways. The number of motorcycle crashes has increased each of the last five years. These crashes included 927 fatal crashes that killed 953 motorcyclists and 13 others. Another 5,296 motorcyclists were seriously injured in these crashes.

In many of these accidents, the motorists tell police that they never saw the motorcycle before the collision. Or the driver fails to properly gauge the speed of the oncoming motorcycle, typically when making a left-hand turn in front of the bike.

While motorcyclists also are responsible for operating safely and being seen on the roadways, here are a few ways drivers can prevent crashes:



- Use enough sunscreen. Most adults need about 1 ounce -- or enough to fill a shot glass -- to fully cover their body. Rub the sunscreen thoroughly into your skin.
- Apply sunscreen to all bare skin. Remember your neck, face, ears, tops of your feet and legs. If you have thinning hair, either apply to your scalp or wear a wide-brimmed hat. To protect your lips, apply a lip balm with a SPF of at least 15.
- To remain protected when outdoors, reapply sunscreen every two hours, or right after swimming or sweating.

- Always signal, check mirrors and double check blind spots. Larger vehicles have larger blind spots.
- Treat motorcycle turn signals with caution. Many motorcycle turn signals do not self-cancel like cars do and riders can forget to turn them off.
- Never try to pass a bike in the same lane. Treat them as you would a car in that lane. The bike needs the space.
- Give motorcycles a safe passing and following distance. Many motorcyclists slow down by rolling off the throttle or downshifting so you may not always see brake lights to alert you of a bike's stop. Allow three to four seconds of following time for motorcycles.