



# Summer Safety

2006

A free summer safety guide presented to you by the Red Bluff Fire Department and VFIS ([www.vfis.com](http://www.vfis.com))

*With summer fast-approaching, more and more people in the Red Bluff area will be enjoying the outdoors. Unfortunately, sun, heat and fair-weather activities such as swimming, biking, picnicking and lawn mowing also present their share of hazards. To help ensure everyone in the community enjoys a safe summer, the members of the Red Bluff Fire Department offer the following safety tips and suggest you post them where they are likely to be seen by the greatest number of people:*

## Heat

Overheating can cause muscle cramps, chills, nausea and dizziness, among other symptoms. At its worst, it can lead to heat stroke, a medical emergency. Don't do too much, too soon. After long periods of inactivity during the winter the body is not ready for strenuous exertion—especially in hot temperatures.

- ◆ Drink plenty of water before and during hard or strenuous work in the heat. You'll need to drink more water than your thirst indicates.
- ◆ Take frequent small drinks, which are more effective, than gulping down large amounts at once.
- ◆ When possible, schedule heavy work for the cooler hours of the day, such as early morning or late afternoon.
- ◆ Take frequent rests, lower the workload as the heat increases.
- ◆ When possible, start with less strenuous work and gradually build-up the intensity so you can acclimate yourself to the heat.
- ◆ Never leave children or pets alone in a car during the summer—even for a second.

## Sun

*Protect yourself from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays. Overexposure to UV rays can lead to eye problems, sunburn and even skin cancer.*

- ◆ Use UV protective sunscreens with a protection factor of at least 15 whenever you are in the sun. Even on cloudy days UV rays can get through and burn skin.
- ◆ Minimize your exposure when the sun's rays are the most intense, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ◆ Wear wide-brimmed hats in the sun—baseball caps do not provide good protection from the sun.

- ◆ Choose sunglasses that block 99% to 100% of the UV light. Wraparound glasses are the best.
- ◆ Babies under the age of 6 months should always be kept out of direct sunlight.

## Swimming

*The Centers for Disease Control reports that drowning is the second leading cause of injury-related death among children 1-14 years of age.*

- ◆ Always swim with a buddy, never alone, even if you are an experienced swimmer.
- ◆ Never leave kids alone while they are in or near a pool, even if they can swim.
- ◆ Know your limits. Don't get overly tired while swimming.
- ◆ Don't swim if you are chilled, overheated, immediately after eating, or during storms.

**Red Bluff Fire Department**  
**530-527-1126**  
**Or call 911 during an emergency**

- ◆ Alcohol and swimming activities do not mix.
- ◆ Do not chew gum or eat while swimming. You could easily choke.
- ◆ Obey the "no diving" signs. It means that the area is unsafe for head-first entries.

- ◆ Always enter the water feet-first if you do not know the depth. Always check for submerged obstacles & hazards.
- ◆ Only dive with your hands in front of your head.
- ◆ Surround your pool on all sides with a sturdy 5-ft fence. Make sure that young kids can't reach the gate latch.
- ◆ Keep rescue equipment such as a life preserver near your pool.
- ◆ Slips and trips are common on slippery surfaces. Discourage running around the pool area.

## Fireworks

*Every year, thousands of people—most of them children—are treated in emergency rooms for injuries related to fireworks. Most of these injuries are the result of improper use of fireworks.*

- ◆ Do not allow children to play with fireworks; always provide adequate supervision when displaying fireworks.
- ◆ Read and follow all instructions on the label.
- ◆ Keep a bucket of water handy.
- ◆ Do not try to re-light malfunctioning fireworks or "duds".

## Biking

*It's important to wear a protective helmet while bike-riding. The American Medical Association reports that 75% of cycling deaths are caused by head injuries.*

- ◆ Ride near the curb, single-file, in the same direction as traffic.
- ◆ Keep to safer, less-traveled routes.
- ◆ Don't do stunts—they can lead to serious injury.
- ◆ Be alert to road hazards such as potholes, rocks and glass that can cause you to lose control.
- ◆ Make yourself visible. Wear bright clothing during the day and wear a reflective vest or use reflective tape on clothing at night.
- ◆ Never ride at dusk without a headlight and red taillight or large rear-facing reflector.
- ◆ Know traffic laws and signals.
- ◆ Make sure that your bicycle is well-maintained.

## Severe Storms

*In the event of an electrical storm—*

- ◆ Get inside a house, large building or automobile.
- ◆ Don't stand next near a single tall tree or the tallest tree in a group.
- ◆ Get out of and away from water.

*In the event of a flash flood—*

- ◆ Go to higher ground, do not try to walk through flowing water more than ankle deep.
- ◆ Do not drive through flooded areas even if it looks shallow enough to cross.
- ◆ Leave the building you are in immediately if you are ordered to evacuate.
- ◆ Do not attempt a rescue of a person stranded in a flash flood. This is a very complicated operation requiring special training and equipment.

## Picnics/Camping

- ◆ Carry an insect sting kit if you have a known allergy to insects. To decrease the risk of insect bites avoid wearing perfumes and clothes with floral patterns.
- ◆ To help prevent food poisoning, keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. Don't store perishable foods in a hot car.
- ◆ Keep kids away from the grills and lighter fluid.
- ◆ Keep grills away from anything that can burn.
- ◆ Be aware of tiny deer ticks that may carry Lyme disease. When in a potentially infested area, apply insect repellent that contains DEET, wear long-sleeve light-colored clothing, and know the symptoms to watch out for.
- ◆ Always check with the local agency's policy on campfires. A campfire permit may be required or a campfire restriction may be in effect.
- ◆ Do not feed or hassle wildlife.

- ◆ Learn to identify poison oak. Wash the contact area with soap and water as soon as possible.
- ◆ Completely extinguish all campfires.



*Early moments of the Main Street fire on May 23, 2002*

## Gasoline

*Summer time also means that gasoline-powered equipment from lawnmowers and trimmers to saws and tractors may be heavily used.*

- ◆ Always store gasoline in an approved safety container with a self-closing lid so vapors cannot escape—and never bring the gasoline inside your living quarters.
- ◆ Never smoke while handling gasoline.
- ◆ Don't use gasoline near sparks, flames, hot surfaces, and sources of static electricity.
- ◆ Never use gasoline to start a fire.
- ◆ Don't use gasoline to clean paintbrushes and tools.

## Lawn Mowing & Yard Work

- ◆ Before you mow, clear the yard of rocks, sticks, and other debris that the mower might fling.
- ◆ Do not mow a wet lawn—you might slip or clog the mower chute. The mower may also damage the lawn.
- ◆ Always clear a clogged grass chute with a stick—never your hands—always with the mower off.
- ◆ Never leave a running mower unattended.
- ◆ Never re-fuel a hot or running mower.
- ◆ Never mow in bare feet or sandals. Wear heavy-duty shoes with non-slip soles.
- ◆ Avoid wearing loose clothing that can get caught in machinery.
- ◆ Always wear eye protection.

## Red Bluff Fire Department

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[www.rbfd.org](http://www.rbfd.org)