

# 4th of July: Red Cross Issues Tips for Everyone to Have a Safe Holiday

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**ST. LOUIS** — Independence Day is coming soon and many people plan to attend fireworks displays, a backyard picnic, or just enjoy the outdoors. The American Red Cross wants you to enjoy a fun-packed, safe holiday and offers these tips you can follow over the upcoming holiday:

## **FIREWORKS SAFETY**

The safest way to enjoy fireworks is to attend a public firework show put on by professionals. Stay at least 500 feet away from the show. Leave any area immediately where untrained amateurs are using fireworks. If you are setting fireworks off at home, follow these safety steps:

- Never give fireworks to small children, and never throw or point a firework toward people, animals, vehicles, structures or flammable materials. Always follow the instructions on the packaging.
- Keep a supply of water close by as a precaution.
- Make sure the person lighting fireworks always wears eye protection.
- Light only one firework at a time and never attempt to relight "a dud."
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place away from children and pets.
- Know your community's fireworks restrictions on what types of fireworks can be set off in neighborhoods. Remember military members and others with PTSD, and pets also may be impacted by the noise of fireworks.

## **PICNIC SAFETY**

- Don't leave food out in the hot sun. Keep perishable foods in a cooler with plenty of ice or freezer gel packs.
- Wash your hands before preparing the food.
- If you are going to grill, always supervise when in use. Don't add charcoal starter fluid when coals have already been ignited. Use the long-handled tools especially made for cooking on the grill to keep the chef safe.
- Never grill indoors. Keep the grill out in the open, away from the house, the deck, tree branches or anything that could catch fire.
- Make sure everyone, including pets, stays away from the grill.

## **HEAT SAFETY**

- Hot cars can be deadly. Never leave children or pets in your vehicle. The inside temperature of the car can quickly reach 120 degrees. Check on animals frequently to ensure that they are not suffering from the heat. Make sure they have plenty of cool water and shade.
- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids. Avoid drinks with caffeine or alcohol.
- Avoid extreme temperature changes.
- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight, light-colored clothing. Avoid dark colors because they absorb the sun's rays.

- Check on family, friends and neighbors who do not have air conditioning, who spend much of their time alone or who are more likely to be affected by the heat. If someone doesn't have air conditioning, they should seek relief from the heat during the warmest part of the day in places like schools, libraries, theaters, malls, etc.

**DOWNLOAD OUR APPS.** The Red Cross app “Emergency” can help keep you and your loved ones safe with real-time alerts, open Red Cross shelter locations and safety advice. The Red Cross First Aid app provides instant access to information on handling the most common emergencies. Download these apps for free by searching for ‘American Red Cross’ in your app store or at [redcross.org/apps](https://www.redcross.org/apps).

### **Follow COVID-19 Guidelines**

Remember to review the latest [COVID-19 pandemic guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19/) from the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** with your family before you head out.