



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Health District reminds Southern Nevadans to stay safe this summer**

**LAS VEGAS** - The triple digit temperatures have arrived and the Southern Nevada Health District reminds visitors and residents alike to stay safe and healthy during the summer. The health district reminds parents about the ABCDs of drowning prevention, sun and heat safety, tips to prevent mosquito bites, and information about swimming safely to prevent illness. Additional information and video is available on the health district website, [www.SNHD.info](http://www.SNHD.info).

**ABCDs of Drowning Prevention**

Since the beginning of year, there have been 20 submersion incidents in our community among children under the age of 14, three of which were drowning deaths. Children should be well-supervised when they have access to any water source, including bathtubs. The health district and its community partners remind parents of the ABCDs of drowning prevention:

- A Adult supervision**, it is recommended that a parent is within arm's length when children are in a pool, bathtub or other water sources
- B Barriers to the pool**, such as fences or gate alarms
- C Classes**, such as swimming and CPR courses
- D Devices** such as personal flotation devices, life jackets and rescue tools

Drowning is a silent killer and a majority of deaths occur in a pool or spa; however, any amount of water can pose a hazard, including a bathtub. In just 10 seconds, or the time it takes to grab a towel, a small child can become submerged and in the two minutes it can take to answer the telephone, a child can lose consciousness. Twenty percent of near-drowning accidents that require hospitalization result in severe and permanent disability.

**UV Protection and Heat Safety**

Southern Nevada's high summertime temperatures are also accompanied by plenty of sunshine. It is important to remember that two of the sun's three types of UV rays can pose hazards to skin, including sunburn and, to a more dangerous extent, skin cancer. Information about sun and heat safety is available on the health district website, [www.SNHD.info](http://www.SNHD.info) or at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention site, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/uvradiation/>

Sunlight exposure is highest between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Anyone who works outdoors or participates in outdoor recreational activities should protect themselves against exposure to excessive heat and sun to prevent sunburns, heat exhaustion, heat stroke and worse. In addition, high summer temperatures can be harmful to older people, children, or those with a chronic medical condition. Information about heat safety is available on the CDC website, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/>.

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## Health District Summer Safety – add one

The health district reminds Valley residents and visitors to take precautions:

- Use sunscreen with a *minimum* SPF 15; reapply at least every two hours or less; apply it to ears, scalp, lips, neck, the top of the feet, back of the hands; apply a minimum of 20 minutes before any sun exposure.
- Wear wide-brimmed hats (*not baseball caps*) and sunglasses with UV protection.
- Wear tightly woven clothing (**not tight fitting**) with high SPF protection to block out light. (*If you can see your hand through the fabric, it offers very little protection against the sun's UV rays*). Clothing can be loose fitting, but cover as much skin as possible.
- Limit or avoid exposure to the sun, especially for long periods of time. **Rest in the shade.**
- Bring an adequate supply of water if plans include extended outdoor activity. Drink plenty of water at regular intervals, regardless of activity level.
- If unaccustomed to working or exercising in a hot environment, start slowly and gradually increase the pace.
- Limit alcoholic beverages and eat well-balanced, light meals
- Check on the status of homebound neighbors and relatives

**Caution:** *Persons who have epilepsy or heart, kidney or liver disease; are on fluid-restrictive or low-salt diets; or have a problem with fluid retention should consult a doctor before increasing liquid intake or changing what they eat and drink.*

### **Fight the Bite**

The health district reminds Southern Nevadans to protect themselves against West Nile virus by avoiding mosquito bites and eliminating stagnant water sources:

- Use insect repellents containing DEET, Picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Follow package directions.
- Wear pants and long-sleeved shirts when outdoors and spray repellent on clothes and exposed areas of skin. Light colored clothing can help you see mosquitoes that land on you.
- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active, notably at dawn and dusk (the first two hours after sunset).

### **Recreational Water Illnesses**

Recreational water illnesses are spread by swallowing, breathing in or having contact with contaminated water from swimming pools, spas, lakes, rivers or oceans. They can cause a variety of symptoms including skin or eye infections, respiratory infections or even wound infections. The most common illness is diarrhea. Swimmers who are ill with diarrhea can easily contaminate large pools or water parks. In addition, lakes, rivers, and the ocean can be contaminated by sewage spills, animal waste and water runoff following rainfall. Some common germs can also live for long periods of time in salt water.

Swimmers are encouraged to follow guidelines to keep germs from spreading and to enjoy the many health benefits swimming offers:

- Do not swallow pool water.
- Do not swim if you are ill with diarrhea.
- Shower with soap before swimming, wash hands after using the restroom or changing diapers.
- Take children on regular bathroom breaks and/or check diapers often.
- Change diapers in a restroom or diaper-changing area, not at poolside.
- Wash children thoroughly (especially their buttocks) with soap and water before they go swimming.

Additional information about recreational water illnesses and prevention is available at the CDC's Healthy Swimming website at [www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming), and the Environmental Protection Agency's beaches website [www.epa.gov/beaches](http://www.epa.gov/beaches).

Updated information about these and other topics is available on the Southern Nevada Health District website, [www.SNHD.info](http://www.SNHD.info), on Facebook [www.facebook.com/SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict](http://www.facebook.com/SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict), on YouTube [www.youtube.com/SNHealthDistrict](http://www.youtube.com/SNHealthDistrict) or Twitter [www.twitter.com/SNHDinfo](http://www.twitter.com/SNHDinfo).