



Keep Cool (and Safe!) in the Pool

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), an average of 350 children under five years of age drown each year in swimming pools, many in residential pools. The CPSC estimates another 2,600 children under age five are treated in hospital emergency rooms each year following submersion incidents. Some of these result in permanent brain damage. The CPSC's study revealed the victims were typically being supervised by one or both parents when the swimming pool accident occurred.

Protecting children from drowning or becoming submerged in a backyard swimming pool calls for more than a single type of safety device. Providing "layers of protection" is the best strategy for keeping children safe in and around the pool.

Layering protection includes placing barriers around your pool to prevent access, using pool alarms, closely supervising your child and being prepared in case of an emergency.

Although residential pools do not require a permit to operate in St. Charles County, the Department of Community Health and the Environment offers the following tips to prevent drowning:

Fences and walls should be at least four feet high and installed completely around the pool.

If your house forms one side of the barrier to the pool, then doors leading from the house to the pool should be

protected with an alarm sounds when a door is unexpectedly opened.

Keep rescue equipment by pool and be sure a phone is handy.

Knowing CPR can be a lifesaver. Contact the health department or the American Red Cross for classes.

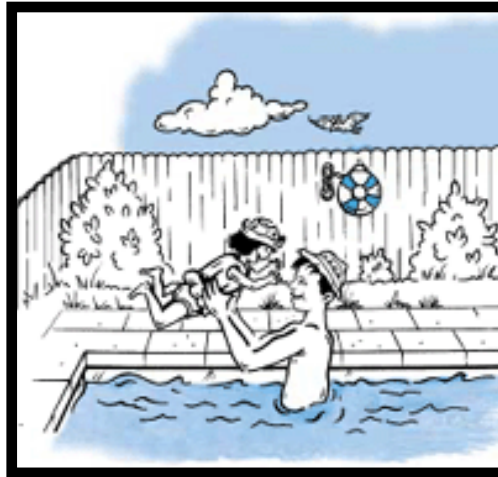
If a child is missing, always look in the pool first. Seconds count in preventing death or disability.

Don't dive if you have been using alcohol or any type of drugs that restrict your ability to react normally.

It is gross, but "Poop in the Pool" occasionally happens and your backyard oasis becomes an accidental bathroom! Fecal matter in pool water can carry germs and bacteria like E. coli and hepatitis A, or even parasites that can make other swimmers sick.

Check your pool's chemistry regularly. Water test kits can be purchased at your local pool supply company. Make sure chlorine levels stay above 2.0 parts per million. The pH needs to be kept between 7.2 and 7.5 for chlorine to be most effective.

Contact the Division of Environmental Health and Protection at (636) 949-1800 if you have questions about your pool. Although the health department does not require homeowners to obtain a permit for a residential pool, we have valuable information on aquatic safety and can refer you to appropriate agencies.



Put It Down: Don't Text While Driving



Cell phones and other electronic devices have enhanced our lives with the speed and ease of retrieving information as well as staying connected. However, some things are not supposed to mix, like texting and driving.

Even a moment's glance at an incoming text can lead to a lifetime of regret. In short, distracted driving is dangerous. In 2008, nearly 6,000 people died in crashes involving a distracted driver.

Recently, the U.S. Department of Transportation launched a national campaign called "Put It Down" to encourage the public to get involved in ending distracted driving. There are two key messages in the campaign.

1. Drivers can't do two things at once.
2. Everyone has a personal responsibility to pay full attention to the road when driving.

For more information on the "Put It Down" campaign, visit www.distraction.gov.

From the Director will return next month!



Diabetes Shouldn't Be A Family Secret

Adapted from CDC

Do you know your family's health history? Or is it like a secret no one wants to talk about? Many health conditions, including type 2 diabetes, run in families. Many people who get type 2 diabetes have one or more family members with the disease.

Almost 24 million Americans have diabetes, a serious disease in which blood glucose (blood sugar) levels are above normal. Most people with diabetes have type 2, which used to be called adult onset diabetes. At one time, type 2 diabetes was more common in people over age 45. But now more young people, even children, have the disease because many are overweight or obese.

Knowing the health history of your siblings, parents, and blood relatives is important because it gives you and your health care team information about your risk for developing health problems, such as type 2 diabetes.

You can't change your family history, but knowing about it can help you work with your health care team to take action on things you can change. Studies have shown that you can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes by losing 5 to 7 percent of your weight, if you are overweight - that's 10 to 14 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds.

Fun in the Sun Tips With Pets

Now that summer is here, most of us will be spending more time outside. Summertime is also fun time for our pets, but make sure they are always wearing a collar and identification tag.

Pets sunburn too, so use sunscreen on their nose and ears if necessary. Pets with light-colored noses or fur are especially vulnerable to sunburn and skin cancer.

Take care when exercising your pet. Adjust the intensity and duration of exercise in accordance with the temperature. On very hot days, limit exercise to early morning or evening hours and be especially careful with short-nosed dogs and those with thick coats. Asphalt gets very hot and can burn your pet's paws.

Finally, people often fertilize their lawns and work in their gardens during the summer months. Be aware that certain plants, plant foods, fertilizers, and insecticides can be fatal if ingested by pets.



You can lose weight by walking 30 minutes a day for five days a week and choosing healthy foods lower in fat and calories.

The National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP), which is jointly sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), urges everyone to explore their family health history and make a family plan to prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes.

1. Ask around. Talk to your relatives to find out if anyone has diabetes. If you have been diagnosed with diabetes, tell your family.

2. Update your health care team on your family history. Talk to your health care team about whether you should be screened for diabetes. It is important to find out early if you have diabetes so you can take steps to manage the disease. People who keep their blood sugar as close to normal as possible in

the early years after they are diagnosed with diabetes have fewer problems with their eyes, nerves, and kidneys, and fewer heart attacks later in life.

3. Make a healthy eating plan for the whole family. The plan should include eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products; choosing lean meats, poultry without the skin, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts, and foods low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

4. Get moving! Make physical activity a family affair. Go for a walk, or play soccer, basketball, or tag with your children. Try swimming, biking, hiking, jogging, or any activity that you enjoy. Vary your activities so you don't get bored. Don't let diabetes be your family secret. Make a family plan to work together to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. If someone in your family has diabetes, ask how family members can support them. For more information, call 1-888-693-6337 or visit www.YourDiabetesInfo.org.

Helpful Phone Numbers

Division of Public Health (636) 949-7400	WIC (636) 949-7402
Immunizations (636) 949-1857	Recycle Works Central (636) 949-7900, ext. 4267
Vital Records (636) 949-7558	Recycle Works West (636) 949-7900, ext. 4271
Health Education and STD Clinic (636) 949-7401	Division of Humane Services Pet Adoption Center (636) 949-7387
Division of Environmental Health and Protection (636) 949-1800	Animal Control (636) 949-7347