



Seasonal Preparedness

For most of us, the long winter is now a memory and we are looking forward to the warm weather, green foliage and outdoor activities brought by the spring and summer seasons. Before dusting off your lawnmower, grill and patio furniture, take a moment to consider some of the seasonal safety and health hazards that accompany spring and summer.

Following are some tips to help you and your loved ones be prepared to enjoy the sunny skies and warmer temperatures whether at home or at work.

Weather

■ Severe Thunderstorms

Thunderstorms can produce tornadoes, strong wind, large hail, and lightning. Keep an eye on the sky and always have a plan to protect yourself in the event the weather quickly changes.

■ Heat

Heat and humidity can take a toll on the body. Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water, know the signs of heat illness and schedule outdoor work and strenuous activities for the coolest time of the day.

The Effects of Heat

Physically

- Dehydration
- Fatigue & lack of motivation
- Heat Rash
- Heat Exhaustion
- Heat Stroke
- Adverse effects on medications

Mentally

- Increased irritability
- Angry moods
- Less alert
- Clouded judgement
- Willingness to take short-cuts
- "I don't care" attitude

■ Sun

The sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays can damage your skin in as little as 15 minutes. Follow these recommendations to help protect yourself.

You can reduce your risk of skin damage and skin cancer by seeking shade under an umbrella, tree, or other shelter before you need relief from the sun. Your best bet to protect your skin is to use sunscreen or wear protective clothing when you're outside.

Wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants and skirts can provide protection from UV rays. Clothes made from tightly woven fabric offer the best protection.

Put on broad spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 15 before you go outside, even on slightly cloudy or cool days. Remember that sunscreen works best when combined with other options to prevent UV damage.

Rodents, Snakes and Insects

■ Insects, Spiders and Ticks

To protect yourself from biting and stinging insects, wear long pants, socks, and long-sleeved shirts. Use an insect repellent that is prevent infection.

approved for use on FR clothing that does not contain Deet. Treat bites and stings with over-the-counter products that relieve pain and

Rodents, Snakes and Insects (cont'd)

■ Rodents and Wild or Stray Animals

Get rid of dead animals as soon as possible. Remember that dead and live animals can spread diseases such as rat bite fever and rabies.

Avoid contact with wild or stray animals. If bitten/scratched, get medical attention immediately.

■ Snakes

Watch where you place your hands and feet when removing debris. If possible, don't place your fingers under debris you are moving and always wear heavy gloves and boots at least 10 inches high.

A snake's striking distance is about half the total length of the snake. If you see a snake, step back and allow it to proceed.

If bitten, note the color and shape of the snake's head to help with treatment. Keep bite victims still and calm to slow the spread of venom in case the snake is poisonous. Seek medical attention and do not cut the wound or attempt to suck out the venom.

Sources:

<https://www.weather.gov>

<http://www.osha.gov>

Additional Resources:

Spring Weather Safety

<https://www.weather.gov/wrn/spring-safety>

OSHA Quick Card

https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/rodents_snakes_insects.pdf

Lyme Disease Fact Sheet

<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/lymefac.pdf>