



Reeves County
Hospital District

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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How to Enjoy a Safe and Fun Independence Day

RCHD offers health and safety tips for the Fourth of July weekend.

PECOS, Texas (June 26, 2020) – With Independence Day just around the corner, Reeves County residents are gearing up for backyard cookouts and fun family activities. However, your family chooses to celebrate this year, Reeves County Hospital District is reminding you to take your health and safety to heart.

“The Fourth of July is a great opportunity to celebrate our nation and spend quality time with our family,” said Dr. Steven Serrano, Family Practice with OB physician, at the Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic., a service of Reeves County Hospital District. “However, emergency rooms see an increase in accidents during the holiday weekend, which is why it is important to take certain precautions to protect yourself and your family.”

To help the community enjoy a safe and healthy holiday weekend, RCHD is offering tips that everyone should keep in mind.

Reduce the risk of COVID-19

The threat of COVID-19 in Texas still remains high. It is important to maintain social distancing precautions during the holiday and until the threat of illness subsides.

When in public, try to maintain a distance of at least six feet between you and others. Additionally, it is suggested that you continue to avoid large groups or gatherings of more than 10 people. It is important that you keep your holiday get-togethers small – preferably with only people from your own household.

Wash your hands frequently with soap and water. It is also recommended that individuals wear masks when in public to reduce the risk of spreading or contracting the novel coronavirus.

Let the professionals handle the fireworks.

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Independence Day and fireworks go hand-in-hand, but fireworks can be dangerous, causing severe burns or worse when not handled properly.

“It’s no secret that emergency rooms see an increase in patients due to firework-related accidents during the summer,” Dr. Serrano said. “Always use extreme caution when handling fireworks. Better yet, leave them to the professionals.”

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 36 percent of fireworks injuries are sustained to hands and fingers, followed by 19 percent equally to eyes and heads/faces/ears. More than 50 percent of injuries are burn-related.

Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks, including sparklers. It is recommended that individuals choose instead to enjoy fireworks shows by professionals.

Don’t Drink and Drive

Studies show that the Fourth of July Holiday ranks second next to New Year’s Eve for alcohol-related traffic accidents. Nationwide, fatality rates of automobile accidents for both teens and adults were twice as high in rural areas.

The best way to ensure that everyone in your community stays safe is to find a designated driver if you or a loved one chooses to drink. Never operate a motor vehicle or boat while under the influence of alcohol.

Stay cool in the sun

In addition to firework accidents, heat-related illness is another common cause of hospital visits during July. Prolonged exposure to the sun and extensive activities in the heat are frequent causes of heat exhaustion.

Common symptoms of heat exhaustion include dizziness, nausea, heavy sweating, weak or rapid pulse,

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headache, and weakness or fatigue. If you have any of these symptoms while outdoors, it is critical that you immediately get out of the heat and rest.

Remember to always stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water. If you are planning to be highly active, such as participating in sports or other vigorous activities, sports drinks with electrolytes might be a great alternative to water.

In addition to hydration, using plenty of sunblock outdoors can help protect your skin from sun damage, which can lead to skin cancer. Typically, sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher is recommended.

“We want our neighbors to spend time enjoying food and fun, not with us in the emergency room,” Dr. Serrano said. “A few simple steps can help you ensure a safe and healthy holiday weekend for you and your family.”

If the unexpected does happen, take comfort knowing that a team of medical providers is right around the corner. The emergency department at the hospital will remain open during the holiday and will be ready to care for patients. The Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic will be closed on Friday, July 3, in observance of the Independence Day Holiday. If an emergency happens, please call 911.

To learn more about local healthcare services or to schedule an appointment at the Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic, please call 432-447-056.

About Reeves County Hospital District

Reeves County Hospital District (RCHD) provides healthcare services for people in Reeves County and neighboring communities in West Texas. Founded in 1954, RCHD, a Level IV Trauma Center, offers a wide variety of medical services, including emergency care, diagnostic radiology, physical therapy, general surgery, a clinical laboratory and more. RCHD also operates American Home Health and Hospice and the Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic, which offers family care, immunizations and other medical services. For more information, please visit www.reevescountyhospital.com.

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