



Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Reeves Regional Health Shares Important Tips for a Safe Memorial Day Holiday Weekend

Summer holidays are often a time for increased injuries and accidents nationwide.

PECOS, Texas (May 20, 2024)—With Memorial Day approaching, Reeves Regional Health is encouraging the community to remember and honor the brave men and women who lost their lives serving our country in the line of duty and protecting our freedoms.

The holiday weekend also kicks off the unofficial start of the summer season, with many Texans planning gatherings with family and friends. With the surge of holiday-related travel, outdoor activities, picnics, and other festivities, RRH officials remind residents in the greater Reeves County region to practice caution to ensure a healthy and safe holiday weekend.

“Summer holiday weekends are often a time when emergency rooms across the country see an uptick in accidents,” says Brenda McKinney, CEO of RRH. “It always happens in an instant, fun turns into a life-threatening accident quickly. Whether it's food preparation errors, injuries from outdoor activities, or accidents caused by drunk driving, taking the right precautions ahead of time can make the difference between having a fun weekend and ending up in the emergency room.”

McKinney says that water safety, staying sober, protecting yourself from the sun, and handling food properly can collectively contribute to a successful holiday weekend. She adds that these tips are not only essential for a safe holiday weekend but can be applied all summer.

Water-related accidents can be avoided.

As the region experiences warmer weather, many families will spend time in pools or head to local lakes. The summer holidays also often result in an increase in water-related accidents, including drownings.

McKinney says that individuals should never swim alone and that children should always be supervised to prevent a fun pastime from becoming a nightmare.

Children should always wear life jackets when boating and adults should be prepared to respond immediately to swimming-related emergencies.

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Buzzed driving is drunk driving.

No matter the time of year, holidays are often busier on the road. If you travel further than usual, it is recommended that your car be inspected and ready before you embark on your journey.

Studies have shown that driving under the influence is more widespread in rural areas, particularly during holiday periods. Across the country, both adolescents and adults have a fatality rate that is twice as high in rural areas compared to urban areas.

“Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol not only puts you and your passengers in danger but also others on the road,” McKinney adds. “The best thing you can do for yourself, your loved ones, and the community is to stay sober. That decision could be a lifesaver!”

Stay safe under the sun.

As the Texas heat begins to heat up, the sun’s intense ultraviolet rays pose many dangers to our skin. Thus, utilizing various measures of skin protection is imperative. Dermatologists recommend that everyone avoid direct sunlight during the heat of the day and always wear high-SPF sunscreen outdoors.

To prevent dehydration, individuals participating in outdoor festivities drink plenty of water and consume fresh fruits and vegetables. Sports drinks with electrolytes may also be helpful for people participating in vigorous activities.

Always handle food properly.

As the temperature rises and the sun shines, families nationwide will gather to savor delicious grilled meals in the great outdoors. Before igniting the grill for the first time this season, it is essential to meticulously inspect the fuel lines and ensure that your grill or barbecue is spotless and positioned safely from houses, trees, and any flammable materials.

Proper food storage is crucial to preventing foodborne illnesses. Food creates an ideal breeding ground for harmful bacteria and pathogens when left outside. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration advises not leaving food out for more than an hour when outdoor temperatures exceed 90 degrees Fahrenheit and for no more than two hours at any other time.

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Moreover, perishable foods that require refrigeration should be stowed in coolers with ample ice and/or freezing packs to uphold a temperature of at least 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

“This Memorial Day, let us not forget the reason for the holiday,” McKinney underscores. “No matter how you choose to observe the holiday, remember to be cautious and safe.”

To learn more about local healthcare services available through Reeves Regional Health, please visit www.reevesregional.com.

About Reeves Regional Health

Reeves Regional Health (RRH), formally known as Reeves County Hospital District, provides healthcare services for Reeves County and neighboring West Texas communities. Founded in 1954, RRH, a Level IV Trauma Center, offers various medical services, including emergency care, diagnostic imaging, physical therapy, general surgery, a clinical laboratory, and more. RRH also operates Reeves Regional Home Health and Hospice and Reeves Regional Rural Health Clinic. In November 2022, RRH began serving patients from a new \$115 million, 140,000-square-foot campus. For more information, please visit www.reevesregional.com.

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