



Press Release
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Reeves Regional Health Urges Smart, Safe Choices This Memorial Day

Local healthcare leaders remind residents to prioritize health and safety as summer begins

PECOS, Texas (May 17, 2025)— As Memorial Day weekend approaches, Reeves Regional Health is encouraging families in Reeves County and surrounding areas to commemorate the holiday by remembering fallen heroes—and by staying safe while celebrating. Whether you're planning a lake day, firing up the grill, or hitting the road, simple precautions can prevent serious accidents and injuries.

“Memorial Day is a time for reflection and gratitude,” says Brenda McKinney, CEO of Reeves Regional Health. “It’s also a time when we see a sharp rise in preventable emergencies. By making careful decisions, our residents can enjoy the long weekend without putting themselves—or others—at risk.”

The extended holiday often brings higher travel volume, outdoor fun, and unfortunately, more trips to the Emergency Department. Reeves Regional Health is offering timely reminders to help prevent accidents and keep the focus on honoring our nation’s service members.

Plan Ahead for Water Safety

Memorial Day typically marks the beginning of swim season. Whether at a public pool or on a boat, water safety should never be overlooked.

“Children should never be left unattended around water—even for a moment,” Louis McIntire, MD, Family Practice with OB provider at Reeves Regional Rural Health Clinic stresses. “Always designate a responsible adult to actively supervise swimmers, and make sure life jackets are worn when boating or near deep water.”

According to the CDC, drowning is a leading cause of injury-related death in children. Adults are urged to avoid alcohol consumption when supervising swimmers or operating watercraft.

Drive Sober, Drive Smart

Motor vehicle crashes increase dramatically during holiday weekends, especially in rural regions like West Texas. Impaired driving remains one of the deadliest risks.

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“Plan your ride before you party,” advises Dr. McIntire. “It’s not just about avoiding a ticket. It’s about protecting lives.”

RRH urges residents to use designated drivers, rideshare apps, or stay overnight when drinking. Motorists should also ensure their vehicles are in safe condition before heading out, particularly for long trips.

Protect Yourself from the Sun and Heat

With high temperatures common in Pecos and across the region, heat-related illness is a real concern.

“Texas summers can be brutal,” says Dr. McIntire. “Take breaks in the shade, wear sunscreen, and drink water consistently—don’t wait until you’re thirsty.”

Reeves Regional providers recommend applying broad-spectrum SPF 30+ sunscreen every two hours and wearing hats or UV-protective clothing. To stay hydrated, drink water frequently and limit sugary or alcoholic drinks, which can worsen dehydration.

Food Safety Matters Outdoors

Backyard barbecues are a Memorial Day favorite—but without proper handling, foodborne illnesses can quickly ruin the fun.

“Warm weather accelerates bacteria growth,” notes Dr. McIntire. “If perishable items are sitting out in the sun, you’re asking for trouble.”

Follow these food safety basics:

- Keep cold foods below 40°F in insulated coolers with ice packs.
- Discard food left out for more than two hours—or one hour if the temperature is above 90°F.
- Use separate cutting boards for raw meats and produce.
- Ensure grilled meats reach safe internal temperatures: 165°F for poultry and 160°F for ground beef.

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Before lighting the grill, inspect fuel lines, clean cooking surfaces, and position the grill away from structures, trees, or anything flammable.

Enjoy Responsibly, Remember Purposefully

As you make plans for the holiday weekend, Reeves Regional Health encourages the community to prioritize safety and look out for one another.

“Have fun, but never forget why we observe Memorial Day,” McKinney says. “This is a time to honor those who gave everything—and we can best honor them by taking care of ourselves, our families, and our neighbors.”

For information about healthcare services or to schedule an appointment at Reeves Regional Rural Health Clinic, call 432-447-3551 or visit www.reevesregional.com.

About Reeves Regional Health

Founded in 1954, Reeves Regional Health (formerly Reeves County Hospital District) proudly serves Reeves County and surrounding communities in West Texas. As a Level IV Trauma Center, RRH provides a full spectrum of care including emergency services, general surgery, imaging, therapy, hospice, and rural health services. In 2022, RRH opened a new 140,000-square-foot facility on a state-of-the-art campus. RRH is committed to meeting the needs of the community with compassion and excellence. Learn more at www.reevesregional.com.

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