



Medicaid Service Coordination (MSC)

E-VISORY



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The MSC E-VISORY is an electronic publication which provides information on policies, guidance, available programs and services and training opportunities related to MSC. In order to receive an email notification when a new MSC E-Visory is posted, or to view past issues visit the following link: [MSC E-Visory Mailing List](#).

In This Issue:

Health and Safety Alert: Summer Safety

OPWDD has issued a Health and Safety Alert, dated May 2014. This alert, which is attached to this E-Visory, provides reminders to help keep everyone safe and healthy against too much sun, protection against summertime insects, water safety, transportation safety, food poisoning, and heat related illnesses. Service Coordinators are encouraged to share this information with individuals and families they serve. This Health and Safety Alert can be accessed at the following link:

[Summer Safety Alert 2014](#)

Health and Safety Alert: Barbeque Grill Safety

OPWDD has issued a Health and Safety Alert, dated May 2014 providing information on grill safety. To encourage safe use of any type of grill individuals should:

- Never use a grill indoors, in a garage, breezeway, carport, porch, awning, or beneath an overhang or other surface that can catch fire or trap heat and carbon monoxide.
- Place the grill at least 10 feet away from any building, deck railings, eaves and overhead branches.
- Keep the grill a safe distance from sitting areas, recreation spaces, and pathways.
- Keep a three-foot "safe zone" around the grill that only the person using the grill can enter.
- Use long-handled grilling tools to give the chef plenty of clearance from heat and flames.
- Only use a grill the way it was intended. Never convert a gas grill to use with charcoal.
- **Never leave a burning grill unattended.**

For additional information and safety considerations please read the Health and Safety Alert attached to this E-Visory. Service Coordinators are encouraged to share this information with individuals and families they serve. This Health and Safety Alert a can be accessed at the following link:

[Grill Safety Alert](#)

SUMMER SAFETY

May 2014

While we are all enjoying the sun and summer fun, below are a few reminders to help keep everyone safe and healthy:

Guard Against TOO MUCH SUN

Too much sun can be dangerous. Everyone reacts differently to the sun's ultraviolet rays and people can burn in as little as 15 minutes. The National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention warns that ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can cause skin cancer. The best insurance against sunburn is to avoid direct exposure to the sun. Even on hazy or cloudy days, the sun's rays can cause damaging sunburn. Follow these "safe sun" guidelines and support and encourage the people you support to do the same:

- Remain in the shade whenever possible.
- Wear UV protective sunglasses and a hat to protect your eyes, head, and ears from the sun
- Use broad-spectrum sunscreen (UVA/UVB protection of 30 SPF or greater). Apply at least 30 minutes before sun exposure and reapply throughout the day. Remember to protect your lips with lip balm that has a minimum SPF of 15
- Be familiar with the side effects of medications you or people for whom you are responsible are taking and take appropriate precautions. Some medications make a person very sensitive to the sun's rays
- Try to stay out of the sun when it is strongest (between 10 am and 2 pm)

Protect Against Summertime INSECTS

Insects such as mosquitoes and ticks can carry diseases. If you will be out at night or hiking in tall grasses or wooded areas, use an insect repellent and check skin and clothing for the presence of ticks. Seek medical attention if you/ person you support is bitten by a tick. If you/someone is allergic to any insect bites, remember to carry an allergy kit.

Practice WATER SAFETY

Wherever there is water, there is a risk of drowning. Drowning can occur in seconds. The following factors can contribute to a drowning accident:

- A medical condition such as a seizure disorder
- A medical emergency while in the water, such as a heart attack, stroke or cramping
- Use of alcohol or drugs, even prescribed medications
- Water conditions, including temperature, clarity or hidden objects

Adequate supervision and simple precautions can save lives! Always take the following precautions:

- Swim in familiar waters where lifeguards are present
- Be responsive to and anticipate changing conditions. If a storm is approaching, get out of the water
- Always wear a Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (PFD) when boating. PFDs must be properly sized and maintained to be effective
- Observe all rules of the swimming area
- Call for help at the first sign of trouble
- **Direct Support Professionals** must maintain visual contact at all times with the individuals for whom they are responsible. Please familiarize yourself with the **Important Information about Drowning** alert (issued February 2011), available on the OPWDD website

Practice TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

In the summer, vehicles, especially vans, allow for heat build-up and do not provide sufficient ventilation even while in motion. **NEVER** stay or leave people in vans or other vehicles in the summer heat. If you will be driving for a long period, bring water for all passengers to drink during the trip

Guard Against FOOD POISONING

- **The USDA warns that food-borne illness (food poisoning) increases in summer months.** Because of heat and humidity, harmful bacteria can quickly multiply on food. When this happens, someone eating the food can get sick. Follow these simple steps to safer food in the summertime:
- **Wash hands and surfaces often.** Unwashed hands and surfaces are a prime cause of food-borne illness
- **Separate and cook.** Keep raw meat juices away from ready-to-eat food. Cook meat thoroughly to kill bacteria
- **CHILL.** Keep cold foods cold. Food left unrefrigerated for more than two hours may not be safe to eat. When the temperature is above 90 °F, food should not be left out for more than one hour. **If you have any doubts, throw it out**

Guard Against HEAT RELATED ILLNESSES

Too much heat can cause serious illness and even death.

- Be aware of the heat, and modify or reschedule outdoor activities accordingly
- Stay in air conditioned areas whenever possible and stay in the shade when outdoors
- Drink plenty of fluids, and limit caffeine. The human body needs water. Dehydration can easily occur in the summer heat even without strenuous exercise or apparent sweating, and can lead to heat related illness
- For more information, see **Prevention of Heat Related Illnesses** (issued May 2012), available on the **OPWDD website**

May 2014

Barbeque Grill Safety:

Barbeque grills must only be used outdoors. The heat created by a grill, and the process of burning any fuel poses both a fire hazard and the risk of carbon monoxide exposure. The following information is designed to encourage safe use of any type of grill:

- Never use a grill indoors, in a garage, breezeway, carport, porch, awning, or beneath an overhang or other surface that can catch fire or trap heat and carbon monoxide.
- Place the grill at least 10 feet away from any building, deck railings, eaves and overhead branches.
- Keep the grill a safe distance from sitting areas, recreation spaces, and pathways.
- Keep a three-foot "safe zone" around the grill that only the person using the grill can enter.
- Use long-handled grilling tools to give the chef plenty of clearance from heat and flames.
- Only use a grill the way it was intended. Never convert a gas grill to use with charcoal.
- **Never leave a burning grill unattended**

Gas Grill Safety:

Liquid petroleum (LP) gas or propane used in gas grills is highly flammable. Hazards increase when a grill that has been left idle for a period of time, and just after refilling and reconnecting the tank. To avoid problems, it is important to check the gas tank hose for leaks, blockages or damage before using it for the first time each year.

A light soap and water solution applied to the hose will quickly reveal escaping propane by releasing bubbles. If you determine your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the soapy bubble test, and there is no flame, turn off the gas tank and grill. If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department.

Also check the tubes that lead into the burner for any blockage from insects, spiders, or food grease. A pipe cleaner or wire can be used to clear blockage by pushing them through to the main part of the burner. Check grill hoses for cracking, brittleness, holes, and leaks and make sure there are no sharp bends in the hose or tubing. Examine the fittings on the hose and replace any scratched or nicked connectors.

Additional safety considerations:

- Keep gas hoses as far away as possible from hot surfaces and dripping hot grease.
- Grills should be cleaned before and after each use
- Clean grease or fat buildup in trays below the grill.
- Open the barbecue lid before turning on the gas or lighting.
- When you have finished cooking with a gas barbecue, turn off the gas cylinder.
- Never leave a gas grill unattended; turn it off if you have to step away.
- Never use gas cylinders that are past their legal use date.
- Never store or use flammable liquids, like gasoline, near the grill.
- Use caution when storing liquid petroleum (LP) gas or propane containers. Never store gas tanks in buildings or garages. If you store a gas grill inside during the winter, disconnect the tank and leave it outside. Always keep containers upright.
- When transporting gas containers, secure them in the vehicle in an upright position.
- Never keep a tank in a hot car or car trunk.

Charcoal Grill Safety Considerations:

- **Remember that a charcoal grill cannot be turned off once lit; it needs to be constantly attended.**
- Use only sufficient charcoal to cover the base of the barbecue to a depth of about 2 inches.
- Store extra charcoal in a metal container with a tight fitting lid to keep it dry: wet charcoal can spontaneously combust, and start a fire.
- If using a fluid to start the charcoal grill, use only starter fluid intended for this purpose. It is extremely dangerous to use any other combustible liquid to start the coals.
- Never apply charcoal lighter/ starter fluid after the charcoal has been lit.
- Store charcoal and starter fluid away from heat sources, and avoid storing large quantities.
- **Make sure charcoal has been completely extinguished before disposing of the ashes and storing the grill;** ashes may reignite 48 to 72 hours after use. Use a non-flammable container such as a metal bucket with a tight fitting cover to store ashes.

Following these safety guidelines is the first step in preventing grill related problems. In the event of a fire or if a gas leak is discovered remember the following:

If you have a grill fire, immediately move a safe distance from the fire and call 911.

If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department.

Do not attempt to move a grill which is on fire or leaking gas.

Additional information on grilling safety can be found at:

NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control:

<http://www.dhSES.ny.gov/ofpc/publications/documents/fire-prevention/bbq.pdf>

National Fire Protection Association:

<http://www.nfpa.org/safety-information/for-consumers/outdoors/grilling>

Consumer Product Safety Commission:

<https://www.cpsc.gov//PageFiles/122359/467.pdf>

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