Beyond Bug Bites & Bright Sun

Heat Stroke: About 620 U.S. deaths per year are attributed to excessive heat, reports the CDC National Center for Health Statistics. Watch for signs of heatstroke: weakness, cold or clammy skin, delirium, fatigue, nausea or vomiting, headache & convulsions. Left untreated, heatstroke can lead to permanent medical problems or death.

Swimming Pools: All public swimming areas can harbor bacteria that cause gastrointestinal, skin, ear infections and more. Accidentally swallowing water that’s been contaminated with feces boosts your risk. As for those brain-eating amoebas you’ve heard about in the news, no need for alarm — there were just 31 infections reported in the United States between 2003 and 2012.

Drowning: Drowning ranks 5th among the leading causes of unintentional injury death in the U.S., with most on beaches & boats. Always wear a life jacket, take swim lessons and leave the booze until you’re done in the water for the day.

Shark attacks? The International Shark Attack File says your chances of death by shark attack are approximately 1 in 3.7 million. There were 32 shark attacks in the United States in 2018. Don’t swim near sandbars & steep drop-offs, in deep water, or during twilight hours — sharks like these conditions.

Lightning strikes: The odds of being struck by lightning in your lifetime are 1 in 15,300. A lightning strike can result in cardiac arrest at the time of the injury. When you see thunderstorms in the forecast, don’t start an 18-hole game of golf! When thunder begins to roar, go inside as soon as possible.

Foodborne illnesses: Each year, 1 in 6 Americans contract food poisoning. Food poisoning peaks in the summer months when warmer temperatures cause foodborne bacteria to flourish. Food poisoning is preventable. Cook your meats thoroughly and don’t cross-contaminate. Any food that’s been unrefrigerated for more than two hours should be tossed. When in doubt, throw it out!

Thrilling grilling: Wash your hands ▪ If you’re in an outdoor setting with no bathroom, use a water jug, some soap, and paper towels. Keep raw food separate from cooked food ▪ Marinate food in the refrigerator, not out on the counter ▪ Don’t reuse marinade that contained raw meat, reserve a separate portion ▪ If you pre-cook food do so right before the food hits the hot grill. Never leave food out for more than one hour when the temperature is above 90°F.

Fireworks injuries: In the month around the fourth of July, 280 people on average go to the emergency room daily with fireworks-related injuries, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Sparklers were the number one cause of injuries, accounting for 14% of the estimated injuries, since they can burn as hot as 2,000 degrees.

Prepare for a Safe Summer

Inside this issue:
- Pets Prep & Travel Tips 2
- Are You A Mosquito Magnet? 2
- Infographic: “Just a Minute” Is Too Long for Pets and Kids 3
- “Do One Thing” a 12 Month Emergency Preparedness Strategy 3
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“The Rensselaer County Preparedness Initiative”

Some areas of NY State are currently experiencing a measles outbreak, including the lower Hudson Valley and parts of New York City. Measles spreads easily and can be dangerous to anyone who is not vaccinated. If you have questions about measles or the measles vaccine, call the NYS Measles Hotline at 1-888-364-4837

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Subscribe here to be added to our mailing list! Mailing list @ Rensselaer County Preparedness Initiative
Keep on your phone, a USB drive and/or “the cloud”: Copies of your pet’s medical records including any medicine required, a recent photo of your pet in case you are separated and need to make a “Lost” poster and a photo of you and your pet for proof of ownership.

www.aspca.org

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**Pet Prep & Travel Tips**

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**Are you a mosquito magnet?**

5 Ways to Fight Off the Bloodsuckers

Some people really are irresistible to mosquitoes, and there is science to back it up. Studies suggest several factors that make some people more attractive to mosquitoes than others.

**PREVENTION**

Mosquito bites are more than an uncomfortable nuisance. Mosquitoes carry many infectious diseases - including malaria, West Nile virus & Zika. The real bloodsuckers are female mosquitoes. They use the protein and iron from human blood to make their eggs, and they are attracted to human skin odor even in the absence of carbon dioxide. Male mosquitoes do not bite and prefer flower nectar. So what steps can you take to minimize your chances of becoming a mosquito’s meal?

1. **Remove Standing Water**
   Remove any standing water from your yard, drains, buckets, pool covers, flowerpots, pet water bowls, gutters or wherever water is stagnant outdoors. Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water.

2. **Bug Lights**
   Use yellow lights or “bug lights” around your backyard or deck; they don’t attract mosquitoes like white lights do.

3. **Fans**
   Use fans to keep a breeze blowing across the area where you plan to be outside. Mosquitoes are not strong fliers & won’t be able to tackle the fans’ airflow.

4. **Citronella Candles**
   Citronella candles offer a mild repellent, but tiki torches offer a bit more protection because they produce smoke - a good deterrent to winged bugs.

5. **Repellents**
   Experts suggest using repellents with ingredients such as DEET and Picaridin, which can last four or more hours. Go to https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-repellent-right-you

While it is not possible to protect yourself from ever being bitten by mosquitoes, you can reduce your chances. Being a magnet is the last thing you want.

**MAIN ATTRACTIONS**

**Carbon dioxide** The gas we exhale is very inviting to mosquitoes based on the scent and the amount we breathe out. When we exhale, chemicals like lactic acid, uric acid and fatty acids join in an invisible carbon dioxide mixture that is unique to our genetics. Larger people exhale more CO2 and are more likely to get bitten by mosquitoes, and pregnant women also exhale more and draw mosquitoes.

**Body odor.** Human sweat when combined with bacterial colonies creates a sweet scent to mosquitoes. We call that scent body odor, and it doesn’t smell sweet to us. Sweat is odorless without the bacteria, so fresh sweat doesn’t have the same appeal to the bugs.

**Alcohol.** A study by the National Center for Biotechnology Information found that drinking alcohol - beer in particular - could make you more appealing to mosquitoes: “Our study demonstrated that percent mosquito landing on volunteers significantly increased after beer ingestion compared with before ingestion, showing clearly that drinking alcohol stimulates mosquito attraction.”

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**Little Road Trip Accessories That Can Make a Big Difference**

- Paper maps
- Spare money
- First aid kit
- Flashlight
- Bug Spray
- Large Water Bottles
- Toilet paper
- Umbrella
- Blanket
- Travel Pillow
- A Towel
- Reusable Water Bottles
- Hand sanitizer
- Body Wipes
- Refuse Bags
- Tweezers
- Swiss Army Knife
- A notebook, pen, & pencil
- Phone charger/USB
- Water!
“Do One Thing” - a 12 Month Emergency Preparedness Strategy

A disaster can have more impact on people with disabilities than others in the community. Use these tools to make sure you and your family are prepared.

Being prepared for a disaster can seem like a big job. Many people don’t know where to start, so they never start at all. With Do 1 Thing, you can take small steps that make a big difference in an emergency.

Do 1 Thing is a 12-month program that makes it easy for you to prepare yourself, your family, and your community for emergencies or disasters: www.Do1Thing.com

Disability Preparedness

Build your own emergency plan using the resources at ready.gov. A disaster can disrupt mail service for days or weeks. If you depend on Social Security or other regular benefits, switching to electronic payments is a simple, significant way to protect yourself financially before disaster strikes. It also eliminates the risk of stolen checks. Federal benefit recipients can sign up by calling (800) 333-1795 or sign up online at https://fiscal.treasury.gov/GoDirect

Make a Plan!

Know what you and your family would do in an emergency. Make A Plan! walks you step-by-step through creating an emergency plan. If you have a disability or chronic condition, also click on the 'Functional Needs' link toward the bottom of the page for advice on how to include in your plan the things that will keep you safe & independent.

Accessible Emergency Preparedness Information

18 different emergency preparedness topics, formatted to be accessible to people who are deaf, blind, or have limited vision. www.accessibleemergencyinfo.com

Prepare Rensselaer County: New Safety Mobile App

Rensselaer County has launched a new emergency app called “Prepare Rensselaer” to help handle emergencies. The Prepare Rensselaer mobile app is an interactive app designed to improve alerting and preparedness for our citizens. Some of the items provided in this app will feature emergency alerts, 7-day weather forecast, social media, and an emergency preparedness plan you can personalize. By empowering our citizens through technology, the Prepare Rensselaer app can aid in preparation in the event of an emergency. The county was able to obtain state grant funding for the app, and it’s free to download.

The app includes four sections: “My Info”; “Checklist”; “Preparedness” and “During a Disaster” where you will find the ‘I’m Okay’ contact form, “Where am I” – a personal locator, a “Damage Report” form, and “Tips to Stay Safe” during emergencies. Also included are a calendar of upcoming events, 511 NY Traffic Information like delays or closures, power outages, and a map with shelters and other important locations. In case of an emergency, you can easily get directions to the nearest shelters.

As always, in an emergency please call 9-1-1.

You Will Never Guess What Kind Of Weather Is the Deadliest

Summary of 2018 Weather Events, Fatalities and Injuries

This NWS report summarizes fatalities and injuries from severe weather in 2018. With severe weather warning systems have much improved over the years, especially since Doppler radars have been used since the 1990’s. Heat is a much different kind of weather event, however.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weather Event</th>
<th>Fatalities</th>
<th>Injuries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convection</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>82</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tornado</td>
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<td>199</td>
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<td>Thunderstorm Wind</td>
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<td>155</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hail</td>
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Extreme Temperatures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Fatalities</th>
<th>Injuries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>503</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Flood

Flash Flood     | 54         | 20       |
River Flood     | 26         | 1        |

Marine

Coastal Storm  | 6          | 0        |
Tsunami        | 0          | 0        |
Rip Current    | 71         | 34       |

Tropical Cyclones

Hurricane      | 7          | 3        |

Winter

Winter Storm    | 4          | 31       |
Ice            | 0          | 0        |
Avalanche      | 6          | 12       |
7 Ways Scammers Get Your Information

Are you being tormented with fake emails and trolling phone calls from scammers who seem to know so much about you? Many don’t understand how they get on the radar of crooks. Scammers are good sleuths, but too often we give our data away.

Here are some of the ways:

1. **Frequently enter contests:** Online contests are gateways to unwanted sales pitches. Not only do marketers collect information like name, age and address, but that you like to travel or are buying a car. Also, they know you believe in luck. That could learn more about those they’ve targeted. So be prudent: Don’t post personal info, narrow who can see your posts and avoid posting real-time updates about your whereabouts.

2. **Mail-in warranty cards:** Ever notice when you fill out a warranty card for a toaster or coffee maker that it requests information like how much money you make? It is likely that your information is being sold to others.

3. **Filling out lots of surveys:** Did you recently fill out a questionnaire rating your stay at a hotel or the service at a restaurant? Selling survey data is big business, and marketing firms and even criminals can learn a lot about you based on travel preferences, what type of home you own or what car you drive.

4. **Sharing personal updates on Facebook:** Scammers turn to social media postings to learn more about those they’ve targeted. So be prudent: Don’t post personal info, narrow who can see your posts and avoid posting real-time updates about your whereabouts.

5. **Public Records:** Many public records are available at the federal, state, county and city levels, including census data, property information, criminal records, bankruptcies and tax liens. Private companies can pull together all this information on you and sell it to anyone. And it’s 100 percent legal!

6. **Tossing your mail? Shred it!** Shred all mail that has your name and address, account numbers, or other personal data. If you don’t have a home shredder, your bank or local office supply store may offer this service. Messy garbage won’t deter a bad guy.

7. **Someone in the family has died recently:** Obituaries are prime hunting ground for scammers, who learn the names of vulnerable widows, widowers, children or grandchildren. Honor the dead, but keep personal information in obituaries to a minimum. Worried? Call AARP’s free Fraud Watch Helpline at 1-877-908-3360 to speak with a volunteer trained in spotting scams.