

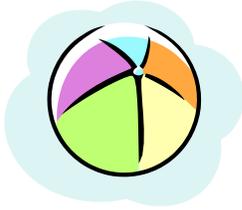


# TDCJ Risk Management's Training Circular

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Risk Management Issues

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## JULY Summer Safety



### BE SAFE THIS SUMMER

The summer holidays are an exciting and busy time, filled with feasting, celebrating, exchanging gifts, and visiting family and friends. But with all the joys of the holiday season come potential safety hazards that can cause injury and even death.

Help prevent injuries by following these tips.

### CARS GET HOT

Young children die every year from being left in a car in the hot sun. Even if you think you will only be a second, take your child with you. Do not leave the car running with the air conditioning on as it makes it an easy target for a car theft *with your child in it!*



### SUNSCREEN

Sunscreen should be part of the morning routine. Even if your child does not seem to burn, sun damage can occur.



And be sure to put it on yourself!

- The first, and often best, line of defense against the sun is covering up. Wear a hat with a three-inch brim or a bill facing forward, sunglasses (look for sunglasses that block 99-100% of ultraviolet rays), and cotton clothing with a tight weave.
- Stay in the shade whenever possible, and avoid sun exposure during the peak intensity hours - between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. The risk of tanning and burning also increases at higher altitude.

- Sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) of 15 should be effective for most people. Be sure to apply enough sunscreen - about one ounce per sitting for a young adult.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or after swimming or sweating. Some self-tanning products contain sunscreen, but others do not, so read the labels carefully. In addition, tanning oils or baby oil provide no protection from the sun.

### POOLS



- Never leave children alone in or near the pool, even for a moment.
- Make sure adults are trained in life-saving techniques and CPR so they can rescue a child if necessary.

- Surround your pool on all four sides with a sturdy five-foot fence.
- Make sure the gates self-close and self-latch at a height children can not reach.
- Keep rescue equipment (a long pole with a hook on the end - and life preserver) and a phone near the pool.
- Avoid inflatable swimming aids such as "floaties." They are not a substitute for approved life vests and can give children a false sense of security.
- Children are not developmentally ready for swim lessons until after their fourth birthday. Swim programs for children under four should not be seen as a way to decrease the risk of drowning.
- Whenever infants or toddlers are in or around water, an adult should be within arm's length, providing "touch supervision."

An important rule of pool safety is **Never Turn Your Back**. Also, be sure the pool area is gated. Do not rely on floaties or other flotation devices.

## THUNDERSTORMS

You should be able to recognize developing thunderstorms before they begin to produce lightning.

Fair weather clouds on a mountain may be puffy, but they are short and show little or no vertical development.

When they begin to tower up and build into deep



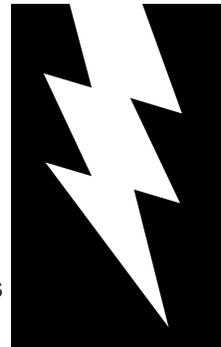
clouds with dark bases they are in the process of becoming thunderstorms. Sometimes, all that they do is to tower up, but when this towering process begins, they go on to become thunderstorms.

A cloud that is tall and beginning to flatten out at the top is definitely a thunderstorm:

- Avoid being the tallest object around ... get as low as you can, but do not lie prone on the ground. Instead, go into a squat. If you are wearing a backpack, take it off and seek the best shelter you can find. The idea is not that the backpack attracts lightning, but rather to facilitate getting to shelter quickly. Obviously, standing on a mountaintop is asking for major-league trouble!
- It also is unwise to be *near* the tallest object around, like an isolated tree. Shel-

tering from the rain under a tree is often a factor in people being struck. Depressions in the rock, or shallow caves don't offer much protection from lightning on a mountaintop. Your best protection is to get down from the peaks as quickly as possible. Leave your gear behind ... whatever it contains is not worth your life! You can always go back and retrieve it after the storm passes.

- There is no "warning sign" that will tell you *reliably* that lightning is about to strike; do not depend on having your hair stand on end, or whatever. The first sign of a Cloud to Ground (CG) lightning strike may be the flash itself. Of course, if your hair *does* stand on end, then you should take steps to protect yourself immediately! If no suitable shelter is available, see bullets above.



- The time from the flash to the thunder is a rough measure of how distant the lightning is. If you see a flash and count the seconds, five seconds corresponds to about a mile. However, there is no dis-

tance from a thunderstorm that is *absolutely* safe! If you can see the lightning, then you are under some threat. CGs can occasionally jump out of a thunderstorm and strike the ground miles away, seemingly "out of the blue." What is currently being advocated is **the "30-30" rule**: take shelter if the time from seeing a flash to the time you hear thunder is 30 seconds or less, and do not resume activities until 30 minutes have elapsed from the last lightning and thunder.

- You do not have to be directly hit by the lightning to be affected. Lightning can travel along the ground from a nearby strike to you. It can also jump from nearby objects that are struck.
- Avoid being near fence lines and power lines that lead into areas where lightning is occurring. A flash can travel along the wires and jump to you.
- Go/Call for medical help immediately if someone is struck! In the meantime, administer CPR to any lightning strike victims if their heart has stopped and they have stopped breathing. If they are simply not conscious, treat for shock (not electrical shock!).

## SCOOTER, BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Scooters, bikes, in-line skates and skateboards are associated with numerous injuries yearly.

- Wear a comfortable, properly fitted helmet bearing the label of an inde-



- pendent testing lab. Be sure that the helmet sits level on top of the head—not rocking in any direction—and always fasten the safety strap.
- Be sure that safety gear (wrist, elbow and knee-pads) fits properly and does not interfere with the rider's movement, vision or hearing. Wrist pads are not recommended for scooter riders as they may affect their ability to maneuver.
- Ride scooters and bikes only on smooth, paved surfaces and only ride during daylight hours.
- Learn the proper hand signals and use them when you turn or stop.

- Come to a complete stop before entering driveways, paths or sidewalks, then look left, right and left again for bikes, cars, or pedestrians heading your way.

- Teach crossing safety to children by example

## LAWNMOWER SAFETY

- Use a mower with a control that stops the mower from moving forward if the handle is let go.
- Children younger than 16 years should not be allowed to use ride-on mowers. Children younger than 12 years should not use walk-behind mowers.
- Make sure that sturdy shoes (not sandals or sneakers) are worn while mowing.
- Prevent injuries from flying objects, such as stones or toys, by picking up objects from the lawn before mowing begins. Use a collection bag for grass clippings or a plate that covers the opening where cut grass is released. Have anyone who uses a mower wear hearing and eye protection.



- Make sure that children are indoors or at a safe distance well away from the area that you plan to mow.
- Start and refuel mowers outdoors, not in a garage or shed. Mowers should be refueled with the motor turned off and cool.
- Make sure that blade settings (to set the wheel height or dislodge debris) are changed by an adult, with the mower off and the spark plug removed or disconnected.
- Do not pull the mower backward or mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary, and carefully look for children behind you when you mow in reverse.
- Always turn off the mower and wait for the blades to stop completely before removing the grass catcher, unclogging the discharge chute, or crossing gravel paths, roads, or other areas.
- When using barbecue grills on decks or patios, be sure to leave sufficient space from siding and eaves.
- Always supervise a barbecue grill when in use
- Keep children and pets far away from grills.
- With charcoal grills, only use charcoal starter fluids designed for barbecue grills and do not add fluid after coals have been lit.
- With gas grills, be sure that the hose connection is tight and check hoses carefully for leaks. Applying soapy water to the hoses will easily and safely reveal any leaks.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and have the grill repaired by a professional, if needed.



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Paul Morales  
Director, Administrative Review and  
Risk Management

Carol Monroe  
Deputy Director, Administrative Review  
and Risk Management

Thomas Warren  
Manager II,  
Risk Management

The *Training Circular*, a publication of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Risk Management Department, is published monthly in an effort to promote and enhance risk management awareness on issues relating to TDCJ employees. Design and layout of the *Training Circular* is performed by Thomas Warren, Manager II, Risk Management. Comments, suggestions and safety related items are welcome. Send Suggestions to:

Thomas Warren  
Risk Management Department  
1060 Highway 190 East  
Huntsville, Texas 77340  
or,  
thomas.warren@tdcj.texas.gov

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## BARBECUE SAFETY

Beware when you barbecue. There are thousands of reported home fires involving gas or charcoal grills in the U.S., leading to millions of dollars in direct property damage, according to NFPA.

