



# SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

GAIL NEWEL, MD, MPH  
HEALTH OFFICER

JAMES A. RYDINGSWORD  
AGENCY DIRECTOR

**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**  
*Healthy People in Healthy Communities*

## Press Release

### Summer Safety Steps to Keep You and Your Family Safe and Healthy

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
29 May 2018

**CONTACT:** Sam Perez, Public Information Officer  
Tel: 831-637-5367

(San Benito County, CA). Summer is a great time to enjoy different indoor and outdoor activities. But every summer, children and adults are injured or die from drowning, falls, and other summer activity-related accidents. Additional summer time risks include heat-related illnesses and diseases from bug bites.

Drowning is a leading cause of unintentional death in children ages 1 to 4, and the fifth leading cause of unintentional injury death for people of all ages. "We want people to practice water safety precautions," said Dr. Gail Newel, Health Officer, San Benito County Public Health Services "A drowning death is devastating for our entire community. Please take necessary steps to stay safe while enjoy summer fun."

"Our older population is especially vulnerable to heat-related illnesses and injuries due to falls. Such events may make an older person feel less confident, become depressed and more socially isolated," said Dr. Newel. "Prevention is the key."

With some preparation, these types of injuries can be avoided. So take a few minutes to be safe and stay healthy this summer. Summer Safety tips can make this summer memorable for summer fun and not for a trip to hospital.

The follow are links for more information and Summer Safety tips.

- Drowning Prevention: CDC at [www.cdc.gov/safecchild/drowning](http://www.cdc.gov/safecchild/drowning)
- CPR & First Aid: American Heart Association at [www.cpr.heart.org](http://www.cpr.heart.org)
- Fall Prevention: National Council on Aging at [www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention](http://www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention)
- Extreme Heat: CDC at [www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat](http://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat)
- Mosquito Bites: CDC at [www.cdc.gov/features/stopmosquitoes](http://www.cdc.gov/features/stopmosquitoes)
- Preventing Tick Bites: CDC at [www.cdc.gov/lyme/prev](http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/prev)

## **Summer Safety Tips**

### Water Safety

For children ages 1 to 4 years, swimming pools pose the greatest risk. It is important to make safety a priority in and around the water.

- Actively supervise children in or near water. NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN ALONE IN OR NEAR WATER.
- Make sure your family knows how to swim.
- Secure pools with appropriate barriers, covers, and alarms.
- Know how to perform CPR – on adults and children.

### Beat the Heat

Whether you are working or playing outside in the summer, if you are not used to the heat, or if the weather is hot, you can be at risk for a heat-related illness. Take steps to protect yourself:

- Never ever leave kids or pets unattended in a car or other vehicle, even if the windows are cracked open.
- Wear loose, lightweight and light-colored clothing.
- Take frequent water breaks.
- Apply sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15.
- Stay cool with cool showers or baths.

### Stop Bug Bites and Disease

Protect yourself and your family by preventing bites and diseases, like West Nile virus, which can be transmitted by insects.

- When outdoors, use effective insect repellent containing active ingredients with EPA approval as repellents for the skin or clothes.
- Check yourself and your children for ticks. No need to panic if you find one. There are several tick removal devices on the market, but a plain set of fine-tipped tweezers will remove a tick effectively.

### Prevent Injuries

Each year emergency departments treat adults and children for falls at home and on the playground. Did you know that one in three older Americans falls every year? Falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries for people aged 65+. Discuss your risk for falls with your healthcare provider and programs and services that can help, especially if you are over 65 years of age.

- Check to make sure that the surfaces under playground equipment are safe, soft, and well-maintained.
- Supervise young children at all times around fall hazards, such as stairs, playground equipment, and upstairs windows.
- Use stair gates, which can help keep a busy, active child from taking a dangerous tumble.

### Bike Safety Tips

Helmet use is the single most effective way to reduce bicycle-related fatalities. One study suggests that helmet use can reduce the risk of head injury by 85 percent and severe brain injury by 88 percent. Approximately 55 percent of children don't wear a helmet while bicycling. Compared to older children, younger children are more likely to wear helmets. Tips for bike safety:

- Wear a helmet
- Find the right helmet that fits correctly
- Use appropriate helmet for different activities
- Model and teach good behavior
- Keep an eye out
- Be bright, use lights

### **Does your helmet fit properly? Take the Helmet Fit Test**

- **Eyes:** Put the helmet on your head. Look up. You should see the bottom rim of the helmet.
- **Ears:** Make sure the straps form a 'V' under your ears when buckled. The straps should be a little tight but comfortable.
- **Mouth:** Open your mouth as wide as you can. Does the helmet hug your head?  
If not, tighten the straps.

For additional safety, use a flashing rear light, and use retro-reflective tape or markings on equipment or clothing. As a reminder, the law requires a front light and a rear red reflector at night.

For more information on bicycle safety, please call Public Health Services at (831) 637-5367; go to San Benito Public Health Services website <http://hhsa.cosb.us/publichealth/>, or the Office of Traffic Safety website at [www.ots.ca.gov](http://www.ots.ca.gov).

###