



## NEWS RELEASE Mobile County Health Department

June 30, 2010

251 N. Bayou St.  
P.O. Box 2867  
Mobile, AL 36652

[www.MobileCountyHealth.org](http://www.MobileCountyHealth.org)

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: David Mann, Public Information Officer, 690-8823, [dmann@mobilecountyhealth.org](mailto:dmann@mobilecountyhealth.org)

---

## Mobile County Health Department offers tips for safe Fourth of July

### Fireworks

Fireworks and the Fourth of July go together, but fireworks are dangerous. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, there were an estimated 9,000 fireworks-related injuries treated in U. S. hospital emergency departments last year. That was a 29 percent increase over the previous year. An estimated 6,000 of those injuries occurred in the month of June and the time immediately surrounding July 4th.

The best way to celebrate the holiday is to go to a public fireworks display. However, for those who decide to use fireworks, the Mobile County Health Department recommends the following safety tips:

- Keep in mind that there are no “safe and sane” fireworks. Fireworks and sparklers are designed to explode or throw off showers of hot sparks at temperatures that may exceed 1,800°F.
- Do not let children less than 14 years of age use fireworks.
- Supervise individuals under age 18.
- Only buy from reliable outlets. Read and follow all the warnings and instructions.
- Use fireworks outdoors only. Keep them away from houses and flammable materials.
- Wear eye and ear protection.
- Have a bucket of water nearby.
- Do NOT try to re-light or handle malfunctioning fireworks. Soak them in water and throw them away.
- Be sure other people are at a safe distance away before lighting fireworks.
- Never ignite fireworks in a container – especially a glass or metal one.
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place according to their specific storage instructions.
- Never experiment or attempt to make your own fireworks.
- Do not wear loose clothing near a fire or while using fireworks.
- Rockets should be launched from a rocket launcher, not a bottle.
- Light sparklers one at a time at arm’s length. Always wear gloves while holding a sparkler and never give one to a child under 5 years of age.

### High temperatures

If you are going to be outside enjoying Fourth of July activities, follow these pointers:

- Limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours.
- Limit strenuous activity.
- Drink two to four glasses of cool, nonalcoholic fluids each hour.
- Rest often in shady areas.
- Wear sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat.
- Use sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher).

-more-

### **Food safety**

- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
- After two hours, discard potentially hazardous foods that have been out of refrigeration or that have not been kept hot.
- Always, wash your hands with hot, soapy water before and after handling food. If you are going to be handling food in area with no hand-washing facilities, take along sanitary towelettes, or a jug of water, liquid hand sanitizer, and paper towels.
- Mayonnaise-based foods need to be kept cold. Mayonnaise alone is too acidic for bacteria to grow in it. However, when it is mixed with other foods, (particularly those that have been handled a lot and/or are protein foods), bacteria can grow if the mixture is kept too warm.
- When marinating for long periods of time, it is important to keep foods refrigerated. Don't use sauce that was used to marinate raw meat or poultry on cooked food. Boil used marinade before applying to cooked food.
- Use a meat thermometer to insure that food reaches a safe internal temperature.
- Hamburgers should be cooked to 160° F, while large cuts of beef such as roasts and steaks may be cooked to 145° F for medium rare or to 160° F for medium. Cook ground poultry to 165° F and poultry parts to 170° F. Fish should be opaque and flake easily.
- When taking foods off the grill, do not put them on a plate that previously held raw food.

### **Driving**

Remember that seat belts save lives. There are usually a lot of people on the road during holiday weekends. Wearing a seat belt can help prevent a person from becoming one of the more than 60 percent of people killed in car accidents each year who were not wearing seat belts.

