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## FLORIDA HEALTH WISHES RESIDENTS AND VISITORS A SAFE, HEALTHY MEMORIAL DAY



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**Tallahassee, Fla.**—Memorial Day is set aside every year to honor those who have served our country, and it marks the unofficial start of summer. The Florida Department of Health encourages residents and visitors to practice safety and consider healthy choices this weekend and throughout the summer months.

“I hope everyone has the opportunity to spend time with their loved ones this holiday weekend and remember the sacrifices of our nation’s active duty and reserve service members and veterans,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary Dr. Celeste Philip. “Classic summer activities like swimming or grilling out are best enjoyed when everyone practices safety.”

Spending any amount of time outside means exposure to potentially harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays. Make sure you use sunscreen with a high SPF and reapply every two hours or after contact with water.

If you are planning on staying active and beating the heat by swimming in a public pool or a beach this weekend, make sure the water is safe. The department conducts routine inspections of public pools to ensure they meet sanitation and safety standards and making the reports available to the public. To access the latest inspection reports for public pools and water playgrounds near you, click [here](#). Additionally, the Florida Healthy Beaches program samples water weekly from beaches along the coast and [reports](#) water quality. Residents and visitors are also reminded to avoid contact with visible algae in the water.

The department recommends the following steps to ensure a healthy swim:

- Shower with soap before you get in the water;
- Don't swallow the water you swim in;
- Stay out of the water if you have diarrhea;
- Parents should take children on bathroom breaks every 60 minutes;
- Wash your hands after visiting the bathroom or changing diapers; and
- Visit your local hardware or pool-supply store and purchase pool test strips to check the chlorine and pH levels before getting into the water.

It is also important to keep an eye on young or inexperienced swimmers in order to prevent injury or drowning. By incorporating [layers of protection](#), including supervision, barriers and emergency preparedness, pool-goers can swim safely and securely. For more information, visit [WaterSmartFL.com](http://WaterSmartFL.com).

Grilling out can be memorable and delicious, but be sure to take precautions to avoid a fire. To enjoy a safe grilling experience, follow these tips:

- All grills should only be used outdoors;
- The grill should be placed away from buildings, deck railings and out from under overhanging trees or objects;
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the area;
- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or buildup from the grates and in the bottom tray;
- Use a food thermometer to ensure foods are cooked to a safe internal temperature; 145 degrees for whole meats, 160 degrees for ground meats and 165 degrees for all poultry; and
- Never leave the grill unattended.

When cooking, avoid food poisoning and keep your cooking area clean, cook foods to the proper and safe temperature and discard perishable items that have been out of the refrigerator longer than two hours.

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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