



Highland Park

Community Council

Preparing for a Safe and Healthy Summer

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Summer has finally arrived! It's time for fresh air, fun in the sun, playing outside and having a ball. It is also time to be more vigilant about personal safety while enjoying the outdoors. Here are some safety tips to make your summer safe, relaxing and pleasurable.

Pedestrian Safety Tips

- Cross the street at marked crosswalks and intersections. Do not jaywalk.
- Before crossing, look left, right, and left again. Then look over your shoulder for turning vehicles.
- Make eye contact with drivers to make sure they see you.
- Use pedestrian pushbuttons.
- Begin crossing the street on the "Walk" signal.
- Wear light-colored or reflective clothing to be visible after dark and in bad weather.
- Watch out for trucks and buses backing out of parking spaces and driveways.

Bicycling Safety Tips

- Obey all regulatory signs and traffic lights.
- Never ride against traffic. Ride with traffic to avoid potential accidents.
- Use hand signals to tell motorists what you intend to do.
- Ride in a straight line to the right of traffic and about a car door width away from parked cars.
- Always wear a helmet. Helmets dramatically reduce the risk of head injury in a bicycle accident.
- Use lights at night and when visibility is poor.

Swimming Pool Safety Tips

- If you're little one already knows how to swim they should still always be supervised. Always provide competent adult supervision when the pool is in use.
- Knowing how to swim doesn't prevent accidents from happening.
- Caution children against showing off and playing rough and explain the dangers of running and diving recklessly.
- Never push others into the pool.
- Pool fences should go around the entire pool and be at least 4 feet tall. There should be a secure latch and/or lock if your child can reach the opening.

Barbecue Safety Tips

- Before using a grill, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line. Make sure the venturi tubes – where the air and gas mix – are not blocked.
- Do not overfill the propane tank.
- Be careful when using lighter fluid. Do not add fluid to an already lit fire because the flames can flashback up into the container and explode.
- Keep all matches and lighters away from children. Teach your children to report any loose matches or lighters to an adult immediately.
- Dispose of hot coals properly – douse them with plenty of water, and stir them to ensure that the fire is out. Never place them in plastic, paper or wooden containers.
- Never grill/barbecue in enclosed areas – carbon monoxide could be produced.
- Always keep a fire extinguisher on hand when grilling.

Home Safety Tips

Residents need to lock their sheds and garages. Officials say the best deterrent to keep thieves from stealing your property is a lock and key. Don't assume you are safe from these unwanted people just because you are at home.

Oftentimes, burglars watch and wait to see where you are and what you are doing. Sheds and garages are often left open and unattended as we do yard work or other outdoor activities. The thief is counting on us to become lax in our security.

To avoid losing valuables, remember to close and lock doors to your garage, shed and home. This is especially true if you are in the front yard and the storage area is in the back. It takes almost no time for a thief to come and go with your property.

Make life difficult for a burglar, use locks and keys to protect your property. If you see a suspicious person or notice an unusual situation around your house or that of a neighbor, call 911.

This time of year we all like to let the fresh air into our homes. During the warm summer months, we need to remember some summer safety tips to avoid those pesky summer pests: burglars.

Here are a few recommendations from the Pittsburgh Police Department's Burglary Unit:

- Never leave a patio door unlocked while away from home. Security experts recommend a security bar placed between the sliding door and the doorjamb. These bars are often referred to as "Charlie bars." Don't assume that the latch on the door is secure enough to ward off a thief. Lock the door at night as well to keep out unwanted guests.
- Always lock windows on the first floor or ground floor. This applies even if there is an enclosed or screened-in porch. It takes so little time and effort to cut through screen mesh and gain access to a home or apartment.
- Always secure windows and doors in the basement. It can be easy to forget about this area of the house during the summer months when we're running in and out doing chores.

Don't forget to lock the windows in the garage too. If there is an entrance to the house through the garage, a thief can enter your residence while you are out tending to the garden or washing your car.

Bike Storage Safety Tips

Bike riding and warm weather are a natural combination. But if your bike is stolen, hiking will be more your speed over the next few months. Since this has been an issue in the past, here are a few tips to keep you property secured.

The Pittsburgh Police suggests all bike owners engrave their bikes. It's very simple to do. Officers say using the ID numbers from a driver's license or Pennsylvania ID card is the best way to mark your bike. **Never use a social security number as an ID number.**

Another suggestion from officers is when storing a bike in a shed or garage, lock and attach it to a lawn mower or other heavy and bulky equipment. Thieves do break into sheds and garages. Attaching a bike to a piece of heavy equipment makes it more difficult to just walk or ride away from the area.

Community safety relies upon the involvement of citizens in protecting their own neighborhood.