

Camp News



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Camp Emergency Plans

Camp season is in full effect; therefore, all organized camps must have a written emergency plan, specific to the camp site. This plan must include procedures for the following emergency situations:

- Natural disasters
- Lost Campers
- Fires
- Transportation emergencies
- Severe illnesses and injuries
- Aquatic emergencies
- Stranger in the camp
- All other emergency situations that is appropriate for the site



These plans must include evacuation procedures and control of vehicle traffic throughout the camp. Furthermore, the plan must have contingencies for communication from people at the site of an emergency to the emergency medical facilities, fire stations, and the administrative and health care personnel at the camp. This plan **MUST** be approved by the camp director and, most importantly, all camp staff should be trained on how to implement the procedures within the emergency plan.

Fire Safety

As the summer heat rises, the risk for fire increases too. As a camp operator, it is essential to take steps to prevent campers and staff from being harmed in a fire. The recent wildfires in California are a reminder that camps must be prepared for wildfires.

If your camp is located near a forest, or an area susceptible to wildfires, make sure there is a plan on how to evacuate campers and staff in the event of a wildfire. The wildfire evacuation plan may need to be different than your normal evacuation plan; therefore, it is important to take into account alternate routes and ways to safety, depending on your location and proximity to the forest.

Preventing fire-related injuries must start with a well trained staff. Make sure you have a fire training program for all camp staff. This includes the proper way to use a fire extinguisher and how camp evacuation procedures work.

When new campers arrive, take the time to show them where the fire alarms are and how to activate them. Also explain and show them what to do in case of a real fire. When a new camping session begins, hold a fire drill within the first day of them arriving. Additionally, it's a good idea to conduct a drill each week, including one during sleeping hours. Although campers may not be excited about being woken up in the middle of the night, it's



important to hold nighttime fire drills for several reasons. Campers could be disoriented during a fire at night because they are sleepy. Evacuation at night takes longer because people tend to be confused to what's going on. The darkness outside, combined with possible heavy smoke and loss of lighting, could make campers more disoriented. Practicing how to evacuate their cabins in an orderly and safe manner will make campers better prepared in the event of a nighttime fire.

Safe Camping Experience

Summer camps should be an enjoyable experience for everyone, where they gain life experiences and create happy memories of their camper days for years to come. Camps should strive to provide their campers with a safe and fun environment. It is important for camps to not leave their campers with memories of stomach aches, bugs, water injuries, or other health concerns. To avoid these safety hazards, follow these tips:



- Self-Latching gates for pools are mandatory.
 - Ensure all buildings are rodent proof against unwanted guests.
 - Wash and clean all linen and bedding.
 - Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds.
 - Cook foods to required temperatures.
 - Maintain proper hot and cold food holding temperatures.
 - Properly cool foods.
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If you have any questions or comments, please contact Scott Stanley, Health Education Specialist II at 800-442-2283 or Scott.Stanley@dph.sbcounty.gov.

We appreciate the effort you make to protect the public's health in our County.