



Yakima Health District

Media Release

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July 4th Celebrations & Summertime Gatherings

Yakima, WA- As the state fully reopens and fourth of July celebrations and summertime gatherings begin, it is an opportunity for individuals to safely socialize and reconnect with friends and family. Fully vaccinated people can now safely gather with others who are fully vaccinated and can also safely engage in more activities. For those who are not fully vaccinated, continue to wear a mask in public indoor settings. There will be vaccine opportunities this fourth of July weekend. Individuals are encouraged to visit YakimaVaccines.org for locations. It is important that everyone who can get vaccinated do so, so that we can stop the spread of COVID-19.

As planning for gatherings begins, the SAFE Model has resourceful information for decision making, planning and participation related to gatherings in the future. It can help contribute to a healthy and secure transition beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, take into consideration heat safety. Additional steps, such as staying indoors in an air-conditioned place as much as possible and drinking plenty of water can help you stay cool and never leave a person or pet in a parked vehicle.

SAFE Model:

S	<u>Safe water recreation activities:</u> Stay informed to prevent drowning. Ensure every member of your family learns to swim and utilize life jackets, even if you are on a boat. Have close supervision of children to prevent drowning and never swim alone. Avoid drinking alcohol when engaging in recreational water activities.
A	<u>Alternative choices:</u> If you plan to go out drinking or to a gathering, decide on a designated driver ahead of time. One or two extra minutes of planning can save lives.
F	<u>Firearm storage and use:</u> If you have weapons, fireworks, or firearms in your home, please follow safe access and storage guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lock It Up: Promoting the safe storage of firearms - King County• Washington Firearm Safe Storage Map - Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center



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Events and celebrations: Consider your options when planning to attend a large-scale celebration or gathering of any kind. If you feel uncomfortable in a large group, don't be afraid to change your plans. Be aware of your surroundings, including the people around you and exits.

Food Safety

As fully vaccinated people begin engaging in more summertime gatherings, it is crucial to follow food safety steps to protect themselves and loved ones from any foodborne illness. These four simple steps can be practiced at home or at individuals' next gatherings:

1. Wash hands and surfaces frequently. Additionally, make sure fruits and vegetables are rinsed.
2. Do not cross contaminate foods. Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from ready-to-eat foods and use separate cutting boards and plates.
3. With a thermometer, check to make sure the food is cooked to the right temperature.
4. Refrigerate food promptly to avoid bacteria growing if left at room temperature.

Quotes

“Vaccines are safe and effective and there are various vaccine opportunities in the community. Let's all continue to do our part.” -Andre Fresco, Executive Director, Yakima Health District

“As the summer approaches and more individuals and families engage in recreational activities, please take into consideration water safety. Ensure your family is safe and wearing life jackets, while out in the water. Taking additional safety considerations can prevent drowning.” -Shawn Magee, Environmental Health Director, Yakima Health District

Additional Information

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Basic Food Safety](#)

[Mental and Emotional Well-Being Resources](#)

[Washington Listens:](#) Call 833-681-0211

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:](#) Call 800-273-8255 (English) or 1-888-628-9454 (Spanish)

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