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## NEWS RELEASE

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### Public Health Provides Labor Day Weekend Safety Tips

Many families will be outdoors, participating in activities and traveling this holiday weekend and Kern County Public Health urges residents to stay safe and healthy by following the below safety tips:

#### Heat Safety

Heat poses a substantial health risk, especially for vulnerable populations including young children, the elderly, those with chronic diseases or disabilities, and pregnant women. Heat safety tips include: drink plenty of water, avoid drinks that contain caffeine, alcohol, or large amounts of sugar, avoid outdoor physical exertion during the hottest parts of the day, wear a wide-brimmed hat to cover the face and neck and loose-fitting clothing, regularly check on any elderly relatives or friends who live alone, and visit this [website](#) to see if there are any Cooling Centers available in your area.

#### Mosquito Safety

West Nile virus (WNV) is mainly transmitted to people through the bites of infected mosquitoes. While WNV causes only mild symptoms in most people, the infection can cause severe illness and even death in rare cases. Remove standing water around your property from containers such as flowerpots and pet bowls to reduce mosquito breeding sites. Decrease risk of getting mosquito bites by applying mosquito repellent, wearing long sleeved shirts and pants, and ensure doors and windows have screens in good repair.

For more information, please visit our WNV webpage <https://kernpublichealth.com/west-nile-virus/>.

#### Water Safety

Bodies of water such as swimming pools and lakes can pose a significant risk to children. Families are reminded to NEVER leave a child unattended while in a body of water. Have a designated Water Watcher, who is a responsible adult watching the kids in the water without distraction. Learn more about becoming a Water Watcher by visiting our website <https://kernpublichealth.com/water-watchers/>.

#### Food Safety

Keep food safety in mind when firing up the grill this weekend to avoid foodborne illness, an unwelcome guest for holiday gatherings! Always start with clean hands but never wash or rinse meat, poultry or seafood prior to grilling. Keep your raw meat, poultry and seafood items separate from other foods to avoid cross contamination. When grilling meat, poultry and fish, it's important to use a food thermometer to make sure your items are truly being cooked to a safe minimum internal temperature.

The recommended safe internal temperature varies depending on the product you're cooking, so use this handy list to know what yours should reach:

- Beef, pork, lamb and veal (steaks, roasts and chops): 145°F
- Ground meats (including burgers and hot dogs): 160°F
- Whole poultry, poultry breasts and ground poultry: 165°F
- Fish: 145°F

Learn more about grilling safely: <https://www.foodsafety.gov/blog/how-grill-safely-summer>