



VIDOR I.S.D POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Spring break is upon us and here are some tips for your break from all the homework. It's important to relax, but not to forgo safety practices. Make sure the memories you make are ones you look back on fondly.

1. **Swim safely.** If you are planning on venturing out into the ocean or any water fun, you should feel confident in your abilities to swim strongly, if not use an inflatable device (tube, noodle, etc.). Remember the buddy system. Designate someone to stay on the beach while you and your friends take a dip. Even the most confident swimmers can fall prey to a rip current. If you do get caught in one, try to relax and swim parallel to the shore until you are free. Draw attention to yourself by waving and calling for help if you are struggling. Your friend on the beach can call 911 throw you a floatation device. Never leave children alone in the water.
2. **Protect your skin.** Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. In 2013, 9,394 people in the U.S. died from melanomas of the skin. You may want to build a tan over the break, but do so with sunscreen that has at least a 15 SPF. Make sure it is not expired, and reapply according to the directions on the bottle. Also use bug repellent when outdoors after dark.
3. **Hydrate.** Whether you are on the beach, at a friend's, or at Disney, hydration should be one of your top concerns during spring break. Always have a bottle of water at hand and make sure you know the signs of dehydration: extreme thirst, less frequent urination, dark-colored urine, fatigue, dizziness, and confusion.

Heatstroke

Heatstroke can occur when the ability to sweat fails and body temperature rises quickly. Heatstroke is often fatal, and those who do survive may have permanent damage to their organs.

- Move the person into a half-sitting position in the shade
- Call for emergency medical help immediately
- If humidity is below 75%, spray the victim with water and fan them vigorously; if humidity is above 75%, apply ice to neck, armpits or groin
- Do not give them anything to drink

Heat Exhaustion

When the body loses an excessive amount of salt and water, heat exhaustion can set in. Symptoms are similar to those of the flu and can include severe thirst, profuse sweating, fatigue, headache, nausea, vomiting and, sometimes, diarrhea. Uncontrolled heat exhaustion can evolve into heatstroke, so make sure to treat the victim quickly.

- Move them to a shaded or air-conditioned area
- Give them water or other cool, nonalcoholic beverages
- Apply wet towels or having them take a cool shower

Heat cramps

Heat cramps are muscle spasms that usually affect the legs or abdominal muscles, often after physical activity. Excessive sweating reduces salt levels in the body, which can result in heat cramps.

- Sit or lie down in the shade.
- Drink cool water or a sports drink.
- Stretch affected muscles.
- Seek medical attention if you have heart problems or if the cramps don't get better in an hour.

Playground safety:

Improper protective surfaces: Fall surfaces should be made of wood chips, mulch, wood fibers, sand, pea gravel, shredded tires or rubber mats and should be at least 12 inches deep.

Inadequate use zone: The area under and around play equipment where a child might fall should be a minimum of 6 feet in all directions.

Protrusion hazards: Beware of hardware that is capable of cutting a child (bolts, hooks, rungs, etc.), or catching strings or items of clothing.

Overcrowded play area: Swings should be set far enough away from other equipment that children won't be hit by a moving swing.

Bike Safety:

- Get acquainted with traffic laws; cyclists must follow the same rules as motorists
- Know your bike's capabilities
- Use hand signals when turning and use extra care at intersections
- Never hitch onto cars
- Before entering traffic, stop and look left, right, left again and over your shoulder
- Wear bright clothing and reflective gear.
- Make sure the bike is equipped with reflectors on the rear, front, pedals and spokes
- A horn or bell and a rear-view mirror, as well as a bright headlight, also is recommended

Pedestrian Safety:

- Look left, right and left again before crossing the street
- Make eye contact with drivers of oncoming vehicles to make sure they see you
- Don't wear headphones while walking
- Never use a cell phone or other electronic device while walking
- If your view is blocked, move to a place where you can see oncoming traffic
- Never rely on a car to stop
- Children younger than 10 should cross the street with an adult
- Only cross at designated crosswalks
- Wear bright and/or reflective clothing



Also, it's time for

- **Time to Change the Clocks**

Daylight Saving Time begins every year on the second Sunday in March. Clocks are set forward one hour, except in Hawaii and most of Arizona. Daylight saving time begins Sunday, March 11, 2018.

It's also a good time to review the following spring safety checklist:

Smoke Alarms

Three out of every five home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Test your smoke alarms every month and replace the battery at least once a year. If the alarm makes a "chirping" sound, replace it immediately.

Smoke alarms should be in every bedroom and in the common areas on each floor of a home. Mount them at least 10 feet from the stove to reduce false alarms, less than 12 inches from the ceiling and away from windows, doors and ducts.

Anything that burns fuel can potentially become a source of carbon monoxide, an invisible, odorless gas that can kill. CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each bedroom and on every level of the home. The safety tips for CO detectors mirror those of smoke alarms: change the batteries, test them and interconnect them, if possible.

(Courtesy of the NSC)