

Safe Kids Kansas warns of trampolines

In 2004, approximately 93,000 children ages 14 and younger were treated in U.S. emergency rooms for trampoline-related injuries — up from nearly 63,400 in 1996. More than 90 percent of these injuries involve home trampolines.

Safe Kids Kansas joins the American Academy of Pediatrics in recommending against trampolines in the home and yard.

“Most trampoline injuries are muscle injuries or broken legs, not fatalities, but we also see head and neck injuries,” says Jan Stegelman, Safe Kids Kansas coordinator. “A concussion or an upper spine injury can be devastating in a child.”

Although many trampoline injuries involve aerial stunts, falling onto the ground or floor, or landing on the springs or frame, more than half of trampoline injuries involve colliding with another jumper.

“Even trampoline manufacturers say there shouldn’t be more than one person on the trampoline at a time,” says Stegelman.

The AAP recommends trampolines be used only as part of a supervised athletic training program — not at home, at school or on playgrounds. In addition, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends that no children younger than 6 use a full-size trampoline.

Safe Kids supports both recommendations.

Based on the AAP’s guidelines for the use of trampolines in supervised training programs, Safe Kids cautions parents and caregivers to look for these features in a supervised trampoline program:

The frame, springs and floor around the trampoline are appropriately padded and the equipment is

inspected frequently. Trained spotters are always used, and a safety harness or spotting belt is available. Ideally, the trampoline is in a pit so its surface is closer to the ground.

There is no ladder near the trampoline, where it could be used by unsupervised children to gain access. The trampoline is not accessible to children when not in use. Jumpers do not attempt stunts or skills beyond their training and demonstrated ability.

“Remember, these guidelines are for organized training programs led by qualified trainers. A trampoline is not a toy and kids should not have access to a trampoline at home,” says Stegelman.

For more information about sports and recreation safety visit www.usa.safekids.org.

Safe Kids Kansas, Inc. is a non-profit Coalition of 67 statewide or-

ganizations and businesses dedicated to preventing accidental injuries to Kansas children ages up to 14. Local coalitions and chapters are located in Allen, Anderson, Atchison, Clay, Coffey, Dickinson, Doniphan, Douglas, Ellis, Ford, Franklin, Geary, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Leavenworth, Marion, Meade, Mitchell, Montgomery, Nemaha, Osage, Pottawatomie, Republic, Rice, Riley, Saline, Smith, Shawnee, Wabaunsee, Wilson and Woodson Counties, as well as the cities of Chanute, Emporia, Leavenworth, Norton, Pittsburg, the Wichita Area and the metro-Kansas City area.

Safe Kids Kansas a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations whose mission is to prevent accidental childhood injury. On the Web at www.kansassafekids.org

Nearly 100 deaths in California heat wave

FRESNO, Calif. (AP) — Along-awaited cooldown began to set in Friday as the number of deaths blamed on California’s record-breaking heat wave approached 100.

The National Weather Service lifted its heat advisories, and highs around the state were expected to dip below the triple-digit mark af-

ter 12 straight days of scorching heat. But in the Central Valley, which has taken the brunt of the heat, temperatures were still expected to hover near 100 degrees.

“It’s a little slower than we would like, but the heat is finally moving out,” said Kathy Hoxsie, a meteorologist with the weather center.

On Thursday, aid workers went

door-to-door checking on the elderly, who are most vulnerable to extreme heat, as the number of suspected heat-related deaths climbed to 98, according to county coroners’ offices.

In Fresno County’s morgue, the walk-in freezer was stuffed with bodies, with some piled on top of others, said Coroner Loralee

Cervantes. With limited air conditioning, employees worked in sweltering heat as they investigated at least 22 possible heat-related deaths.

In Stanislaus County, officials were investigating whether the heat was responsible for 20 deaths, and Sacramento County reported 11 possible heat victims.

Peanut crop suffers

ALBANY, Ga. (AP) — U.S. peanut farmers are expected to produce their smallest crop since 1915, but there still should be enough to supply consumers with jars of peanut butter and nutty chocolates without significant price increases.

The small crop is a result of farmers responding to low prices, higher production costs and now drought.

Large peanut crops in 2004 and 2005 created a surplus that depressed spring contract offers, prompting farmers to reduce their peanut acreage while increasing the amount of land devoted to other crops, such as cotton.

Then dry weather set in, threatening to make an already scaled-back peanut crop even smaller.

“There are two simple reasons: economics and drought,” said Dallas Hartzog, a peanut agronomist at Wiregrass Research and Extension Center in Headland, Ala.

U.S. peanut acreage dropped to an estimated 1.3 million acres this year, from about 1.7 million last year — the second largest peanut crop on record, according to the Agriculture Department.

The large supply going into 2006, plus low prices and spiraling costs for fuel, fertilizers and pesticides, provided fewer incen-

tives for planting peanuts, agriculture officials said.

So, growers in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and South Carolina planted 22 percent less than last year. Those in Virginia and North Carolina planted 18 percent less, while those in New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas planted 20 percent less.

A drought is plaguing the crop across most of the peanut belt. More than half the fields in Texas, Oklahoma and Alabama report very short soil moisture, and 44 percent of Georgia’s fields have reported very short soil moisture.


But experts say peanuts have a potential to rebound if they receive adequate rainfall in August and early September.

“Our crop right now is struggling,” said John Beasley, a University of Georgia peanut agronomist. “But there’s still time for this to turn around.”

Joe Boddiford, a Screven County peanut farmer and member of the Georgia Peanut Commission board, said he’s running his irrigation systems around the clock and staying up at all hours to repair them.

The diesel engines that run his pumps burn \$16,000 worth of fuel every 10 days, he said.

“That gets discouraging,” he said.



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