



LifeLines

information for your life

GOING CAMPING? Keep It Green.

Summertime is known for warm weather, great food, and family vacations. Camping can bring you close to the environment. But sometimes the small details get taken for granted. With some extra time and attention, you can save money and help the environment. To make your next camping trip a truly “green” experience, try the following tips.

A camping trip starts with packing. Make a list of what you think you will need for the trip. Go shopping only once. It’s more efficient and will save you fuel and money. Look for a tent or sleeping bag made from recycled materials at your local camping supply store. Bring reusable dishes that can be used for years. Pack a bucket with biodegradable soap to wash them. Avoid paper or Styrofoam one-use plates and plastic utensils. Bring dish towels from home instead of paper towels. Use storage containers for leftovers instead of plastic bags. Look for solar-powered cook stoves and crank-powered radios and flashlights. Use citronella candles instead of bug sprays that contain chemicals. These candles are an excellent way to repel insects.

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SUMMER POOL SAFETY

Everybody in the pool! Summer’s hot temperatures means more of us will be spending time swimming. Make sure your family stays safe this summer by following some simple rules for pool safety:

Stay Close, Be Alert, and Watch Children in and Around the Pool.

- Always watch your children when they are in or near a pool or spa.
- Teach children basic water safety tips.
- Keep children away from pool drains, pipes, and other openings.
- Have a portable telephone close by at all times when in the pool or spa.
- If a child is missing, look for him or her in the pool or spa first.
- Share safety instructions with family, friends, and neighbors.

Learn and Practice Water Safety Skills.

- Learn how to swim and teach your child how to swim.
- Learn to perform CPR on children and adults, and update those skills regularly.
- Understand the basics of life-saving, so that you can assist in a pool emergency.

Have the Appropriate Equipment for Your Pool or Spa.

- Install a four-foot or taller fence around the pool and spa and use self-closing and self-latching gates; ask your neighbors to do the same at their pools.
- Install and use a lockable safety cover on your spa.
- If your house serves as a fourth side of a fence around a pool, install door alarms and always use them. For additional protection, install window guards on windows facing pools or spas.
- Install pool and gate alarms to alert you when children go near the water.
- Ensure any pool or spa you use has compliant drain covers, and ask your pool service provider if you do not know.
- Maintain pool and spa covers in good working order.
- Consider using a surface wave or underwater alarm.

Adapted from Staying Safe in Residential Pools. Retrieved March 2012. <http://www.poolsafety.gov>

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SIX MYTHS ABOUT STRESS

Six myths surround stress. Dispelling them enables people to understand some of their problems and then take action against them. Here is a look at these myths.

MYTH 1:

Stress is the same for everybody.

This is completely wrong. Stress is different for each person. What is stressful for one person may or may not be stressful for another; each person responds to stress in an entirely different way.

MYTH 2:

Stress is always bad for you.

According to this view, zero stress makes people happy and healthy. This is wrong. Stress is to the human condition what tension is to the violin string: too little and the music is dull and raspy; too much and the music is shrill or the string snaps. Stress can be the kiss of death or the spice of life. The issue, really, is how to manage it. Managed stress makes people productive and happy; mismanaged stress hurts and even kills people.

MYTH 3:

Stress is everywhere, so you can't do anything about it.

This is not so. You can plan your life so that stress does not overwhelm you. Effective planning involves setting priorities and working on simple problems first, solving them, and then going on to more complex difficulties. When stress is mismanaged, it's difficult to prioritize. All your problems seem to be equal and stress seems to be everywhere.

MYTH 4:

The most popular techniques for reducing stress are the best ones.

Again, this is not so. No universally effective stress reduction techniques exist. People are all different, their lives are different, their situations are different, and their reactions are different. Only a comprehensive program tailored to the individual works to reduce stress.

MYTH 5:

No symptoms, means no stress.

Absence of symptoms does not mean the absence of stress. In fact, camouflaging symptoms with medication may deprive you of the signals you need for reducing the strain on your physiological and psychological systems.

MYTH 6:

Only major symptoms of stress require attention.

This myth assumes that the minor symptoms, such as headaches or stomach acid, may be safely ignored. Minor symptoms of stress are the early warnings that your life is getting out of hand and that you need to do a better job of managing stress.

American Psychological Association (APA). Six myths about stress. Retrieved March 2012. APA Help Center: <http://www.apahelpcenter.org/>

Prescription Medicine: DISPOSE OF IT SAFELY

Overview

We need medications to treat many conditions and diseases. But it is important to get rid of unused medicines to avoid harm to others. Here are some ways of disposing those that you no longer need.

Medicine Take-Back Programs

Medicine take-back programs can take expired, unwanted, or unused medicines from your home. Contact your city or county household trash and recycling service. A representative may know of a medicine take-back program in your area. You can also talk to your pharmacist. Ask if he or she knows of other medicine disposal programs.

Disposal in Household Trash

If there is no medicine take-back program in your area, you can also follow these simple steps to dispose of most medicines in the household trash:

- Mix medicines with a substance such as kitty litter or used coffee grounds.

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Pick a camping site close to home to reduce gas use and save a little money. Enjoy nature by playing outside or taking a hike instead of using the RV's generator for a television or game system. Stay in designated areas to avoid harming plant and wildlife if you are spending a night under the stars. Use energy-efficient lighting sources such as LED lanterns and flashlights. Pick up all trash and recyclables, so you leave the campsite in the same condition it was in when you arrived. If the campsite does not have recycling bins, take those items back home to recycle.

One of the best parts of camping is the cooking. Use the campsite grill, if available, instead of bringing a cook stove or propane grill. Use firewood that may be available for purchase at the campground store or charcoal with a chimney starter to avoid releasing chemicals into the air with lighter fluid. Look online before you go camping to find recipes that can be made over a campfire. Purchase produce for your trip from the local farmers' market.

Adapted from Green Tips for Every Occasion. Missouri Department of Natural Resources Website. Retrieved March 2012.

<http://www.dnr.mo.gov/env/swmp/GreenTips.htm#Camping>

Prescription Medicine: DISPOSE OF IT SAFELY

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- Place the mixture in a container, such as a sealed plastic bag.
- Throw the container in your household trash.

Flushing of Certain Medicines

The FDA recommends that some medicines be flushed down the sink or toilet. Then they cannot be accidentally used by children, pets, or anyone else. Visit www.fda.gov and look for the Drug section, which has information about using prescriptions safely and a full list of drugs that should be disposed of by flushing. You may also contact the FDA by phone at 1-888-INFO-FDA (1-888-463-6332).

Adapted from Disposal of Unused Medicines: What You Should Know. U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Retrieved March 2012.

<http://www.fda.gov/drugs/resourcesforyou/consumers/buyingusingmedicinesafely/ensuringsafeuseofmedicine/safedisposalofmedicines/ucm186187.htm>