

May 24, 2023

DOH-MARTIN ENCOURAGES A SAFE AND HEALTHY MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND



Contact:

Renay Rouse Renay.Rouse@FLHealth.gov 772-631-6008

Martin County, FL – The Florida Department of Health in Martin County (DOH-Martin) encourages residents and visitors to enjoy a safe and healthy Memorial Day weekend.

Follow these tips for a healthy holiday weekend.

Water Safety:

Each year, many children drown during summer holiday weekends. Awareness of the basic principles of water safety, combined with knowledge and understanding of water hazards, can increase enjoyment and significantly reduce drowning deaths each year.

- Always keep your eyes on children in and around water, including pools and open bodies of water. Actively supervising and giving children your undivided attention when they are in or around water can help prevent drownings.
- **Never** leave a child alone around water.
- If your child is missing, check other pools or surrounding bodies of water.
- Use barriers around water, including fences, self-closing/self-latching gates, and secure doors with alarms. Barriers help prevent young children from wandering into bodies of water, including lakes, pools, ponds, and more.

Sun Safety:

- Seek shade when the sun is strongest, which is typically between the hours of 10 am and 4 pm.
- Wear broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 15 on all parts of exposed skin before you go outside. Remember to reapply every two hours after swimming or sweating.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat that shades your face, ears, and back of your neck. Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes and the delicate skin around your eyes from sun exposure.
- For additional protection, you can wear light, long-sleeved shirts.

Food Safety:

- Before and after handling raw meat, poultry, eggs, and seafood, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Separate raw food to prevent cross contamination. Use one cutting board for raw meat, poultry, and seafood and another for vegetables and fruits.
- Cook all foods to the proper temperature by using a food thermometer.
- Make sure to refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours. If the temperature is above 90 degrees Fahrenheit, chill food within 1 hour.

Health Alert:

A health alert remains in effect for the presence of harmful blue-green algal toxins for the waters in [Lake Okeechobee-L004](#) for the [S308C area](#) near Port Mayaca.

Residents and visitors are advised to take the following precautions:

- Do not drink, swim, wade, use personal watercraft, water ski or boat in waters where there is a visible bloom.
- Wash your skin and clothing with soap and water if you have contact with algae or discolored or smelly water.
- Keep pets away from the area. Waters where there are algae blooms are not safe for animals. Pets and livestock should have a different source of water when algae blooms are present.
- Do not cook or clean dishes with water contaminated by algae blooms. Boiling the water will not eliminate the toxins.
- Eating fillets from healthy fish caught in freshwater lakes experiencing blooms is safe. Rinse fish fillets with tap or bottled water, throw out the guts and cook fish well.
- Do not eat shellfish in waters with algae blooms.

Mosquito Bite Prevention:

Wearing lightweight clothing that covers arms and legs, as well as mosquito repellent, can keep bites to a minimum. The [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) keeps a current listing of safe and reliable repellents. For best results, follow all label directions.

- Drain standing water in containers around your home to prevent mosquitoes from breeding.
- For mosquito breeding concerns, call Martin County Mosquito Control: 772-419-6974.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@GoHealthyMartin](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.MartinCountyHealth.com](#)