



Yadkin County Fire Marshal's Office



August

Prevention Bulletin

2025

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SCHOOL'S OPEN!

DRIVE CAREFULLY AND WATCH OUT FOR KIDS



Slow Down: Back to School Means Sharing the Road

School days bring congestion: yellow school buses are picking up their charges, kids on bikes are hurrying to get to school before the bell rings, harried parents are trying to drop their kids off before work.

It's never more important for drivers to slow down and pay attention than when kids are present – especially before and after school.

If You're Dropping Off

Schools often have very specific drop-off procedures for the school year. Make sure you know them for the safety of all kids. More children are hit by cars near schools than at any other location, according to the National Safe Routes to School program. The following apply to all school zones:

- Don't double park; it blocks visibility for other children and vehicles
- Don't load or unload children across the street from the school
- Carpool to reduce the number of vehicles at the school



Sharing the Road with Young Pedestrians

According to research by the National Safety Council, most of the children who lose their lives in bus-related incidents are 4 to 7 years old, and they're walking. They are hit by the bus, or by a motorist illegally passing a stopped bus. A few precautions go a long way toward keeping children safe:

- Don't block the crosswalk when stopped at a red light or waiting to make a turn, forcing pedestrians to go around you; this could put them in the path of moving traffic
- In a school zone when flashers are blinking, stop and yield to pedestrians crossing the crosswalk or intersection
- Always stop for a school patrol officer or crossing guard holding up a stop sign
- Take extra care to look out for children in school zones, near playgrounds and parks, and in all residential areas
- Don't honk or rev your engine to scare a pedestrian, even if you have the right of way
- Never pass a vehicle stopped for pedestrians
- Always use extreme caution to avoid striking pedestrians wherever they may be, no matter who has the right of way

Sharing the Road with School Buses

If you're driving behind a bus, allow a greater following distance than if you were driving behind a car. It will give you more time to stop once the yellow lights start flashing. It is illegal in all 50 states to pass a school bus that is stopped to load or unload children.

- Never pass a bus from behind – or from either direction if you're on an undivided road – if it is stopped to load or unload children
- If the yellow or red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended, traffic must stop
- The area 10 feet around a school bus is the most dangerous for children; stop far enough back to allow them space to safely enter and exit the bus
- Be alert; children often are unpredictable, and they tend to ignore hazards and take risks

Sharing the Road with Bicyclists

On most roads, bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as vehicles, but bikes can be hard to see. Children riding bikes create special problems for drivers because usually they are not able to properly determine traffic conditions. The most common cause of collision is a driver turning left in front of a bicyclist.

- When passing a bicyclist, proceed in the same direction slowly, and leave 3 feet between your car and the cyclist
- When turning left and a bicyclist is approaching in the opposite direction, wait for the rider to pass
- If you're turning right and a bicyclist is approaching from behind on the right, let the rider go through the intersection first, and always use your turn signals
- Watch for bike riders turning in front of you without looking or signaling; children especially have a tendency to do this
- Be extra vigilant in school zones and residential neighborhoods
- Watch for bikes coming from driveways or behind parked cars
- Check side mirrors before opening your door

By exercising a little extra care and caution, drivers and pedestrians can co-exist safely in school zones.



College Campus Fire Safety

College students living away from home should take a few minutes to make sure they are living in a fire-safe environment. Educating students on what they can do to stay safe during the school year is important and often overlooked.

SAFETY TIPS

- Look for fully sprinklered housing when choosing a dorm or off-campus housing.
- Make sure you can hear the building alarm system when you are in your dorm room.
- If you live in a dormitory, make sure your sleeping room has a smoke alarm, or your dormitory suite has a smoke alarm in each living area as well as the sleeping room. For the best protection, all smoke alarms in the dormitory suite should be interconnected so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- If you live in an apartment or house, make sure smoke alarms are installed in each sleeping room, outside every sleeping area, and on each level of the apartment unit or house. For the best protection, all smoke alarms in the apartment unit or house should be interconnected so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- Test all smoke alarms at least monthly.
- Never remove batteries or disable the alarm.
- Learn your building's evacuation plan and practice all drills as if they were the real thing.
- If you live off campus, have a fire escape plan with two ways out of every room.
- When the smoke alarm or fire alarm sounds, get out of the building quickly and stay out.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking.
- Cook only when you are alert, not sleepy or drowsy from medicine or alcohol.
- Check with your local fire department for any restrictions before using a barbeque grill, fire pit, or chimenea.
- Check your school's rules before using electrical appliances in your room.



Smoking Sense

If you smoke, smoke outside and only where it is permitted. Use sturdy, deep, non-tip ashtrays. Don't smoke in bed or when you've been drinking or are drowsy.

Candle Care

Burn candles only if the school permits their use. A candle is an open flame and should be placed away from anything that can burn. Never leave a candle unattended. Blow it out when you leave the room or go to sleep.

FACT

- ❗ Fires in dormitories are more common during the evening hours, between 5–11 pm, and on weekends.
- ❗ Roughly six out of seven fires in dormitories are started by cooking.



**NATIONAL FIRE
PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**
The leading information and knowledge resource
on fire, electrical and related hazards



Backpack Safety

By: Saji Azerf, MD, FAAP

Being loaded down with textbooks, gym equipment and school supplies can make backpacks heavy and hard to wear. If they're not worn properly, backpacks may cause back, neck and shoulder pain in children and teens. While backpacks have not been shown to cause scoliosis or long-term problems, it's never too early to start good habits that can decrease back strain and pain.



Use the tips below to choose the best school backpack for your child.

How to choose the right backpack for school

Here's what to look for in the perfect backpack:

- Correct size—Bigger is not necessarily better. The more room there is in a backpack, the more your child will carry-and the heavier the backpack will become. Make sure to choose the right backpack that fits your child and their needs the best. The bag you choose should be proportional to your child's height.
- Has two broad, padded shoulder straps—Having adjustable straps that are broad and distribute weight evenly between both shoulders is important. More padding does not translate to less pain. Both straps should stay even in length. Non padded straps can be uncomfortable and dig into your child's shoulders.
- Has a padded back—This can provide increased comfort when the backpack is appropriately fitted and close to their back. It also protects them from being poked by sharp objects or edges (pencils, rulers, notebooks, etc.) inside the pack.
- Includes a waist belt or chest strap—Belts and straps help redistribute the weight of the backpack more evenly across the body.
- Look for backpacks with compartments: These can help evenly distribute the weight of contents throughout the backpack.

Tip: *Include your child in the decision-making process and help them make a smart purchase. This will allow them to tote their packs comfortably all year long and you won't have to go searching for a replacement.*

How to safely pack a school backpack

- Pack the backpack so that most of its weight rests in the curve of your child's lower back. Pack the heaviest items like textbooks and computers closest to the body and place other items equally on the right and left sides.
- Pack items in the different compartments. This helps distribute heavy loads evenly.

How to know if your child's backpack is too heavy

- Backpacks shouldn't weigh more than 15% of your child's body weight. This means a child who weighs 100 pounds shouldn't have a backpack that weighs more than 15 pounds.
- If your child needs to lean forward to support the backpack's weight, then it's too heavy. Consider using a backpack with handles or a rolling backpack if your school allows it.

To help keep lighten the load, encourage your child to:

- Clean the backpack weekly and take out unneeded items.
- Store items in a locker when possible.
- Take only what's needed to school.

Teach your child how to pick up & wear a backpack the right way

When picking up their backpack, your child should bend their knees to avoid back strain. Then, the key is wearing the backpack so that it puts weight on the strongest muscles in the body: the back and abdominal muscles.

- Use both shoulder straps. Slinging a backpack over one shoulder can strain muscles.
 - Adjust the shoulder straps so the backpack rests in the middle of your child's back.
 - The backpack should fit close to your child's body.
 - Secure the waist or chest strap. This helps keep the backpack close to your child's body and distribute the weight more evenly.
- Make sure the bottom of the backpack rests in the curve of the lower back. The backpack should go from waist level up to about 1-2 inches below the shoulders. A backpack should never sit more than 4 inches below the waistline (bellybutton).

When not to wear a backpack

There may be times where your child or teen shouldn't wear a backpack, such as after surgery or an injury. Consider requesting a second set of books to have at home, if possible, and time to go back and forth to a locker so only items for one class at a time need to be carried.

Talk with your pediatrician

Reinforcing healthy back habits for your child can help reduce the risk of back pain. Do not ignore back pain in a child or teenager that occurs at times other than wearing a backpack. Ask your pediatrician for advice.

More information

- [Backpack Safety](#) (Pediatric Orthopedic Society of North America)

AUG. 11TH (8/11) SERVES AS A CONVENIENT REMINDER FOR NC RESIDENTS TO ALWAYS CONTACT 811 BEFORE DIGGING

RESIDENTS TO ALWAYS CALL 811 BEFORE DIGGING

North Carolina 811 encourages people to make a free request 3 working days before digging to avoid damaging buried utilities

Aug. 11th is almost here, and North Carolina 811 hopes that the 8/11 date on the calendar will serve as a natural reminder for residents to call 811 prior to any digging project to have underground utility lines marked. Every few minutes an underground utility line is damaged because someone decided to dig without first calling 811.

When calling 811, homeowners and contractors are connected to North Carolina 811, the local one call center, which notifies the appropriate utility companies of their intent to dig. Single address ticket request can also be made online at <https://newtin.nc811.org/nc811oa/> Professional locators then arrive at the requested digging site to mark the approximate locations of underground lines with flags, spray paint or both.

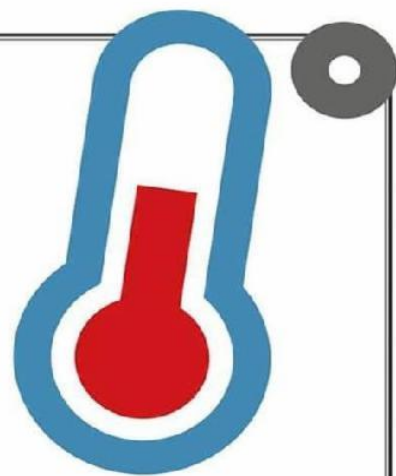
Striking a single line can cause injury, repair costs, inconvenient outages, and fines. Every digging project, no matter how large or small, warrants contacting 811 by phone or online. Installing a mailbox, building a deck, planting a tree and laying a patio are all examples of digging projects that require a free request at least three days before breaking ground.

"On Aug. 11 and throughout the year, we remind homeowners and professional contractors alike to the free 811 service before digging to reduce the risk of striking an underground utility line," said Louis Panzer, Executive Director for North Carolina 811. "It really is the only way to know which utilities are buried in your area."

The depth of utility lines can vary for a number of reasons, such as erosion, previous digging projects and uneven surfaces. Utility lines need to be properly marked because even when digging only a few inches or digging in a location that has previously been marked, the risk of striking an underground utility line still exists. Visit www.nc811.org for more information about 811 and safe digging practices



Keep your dog **SAFE** in **HOT WEATHER**



✓ Top Tips

Walk your dog during cooler parts of the day, either early morning or late evening.



Always provide fresh, clean water.



Ensure your dog has access to plenty of shade.



Your dog may appreciate a paddling pool to splash around in.



✗ Avoid

Never, under any circumstances, leave your dog in a parked car.



Avoid walking your dog on hot pavements as their paw pads can easily burn.



Keep your dog out of direct sunlight for prolonged periods of time.

Signs of Heatstroke



- Excessive Panting
- Drooling
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Weakness
- Increased heart rate
- Seizures

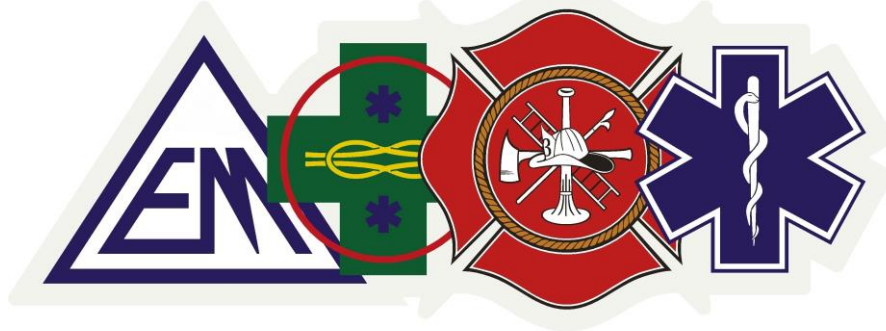
Dogs at Higher Risk

- Brachycephalic (flat-faced) breeds, such as Pugs, Bulldogs and Boxers
- Senior dogs
- Obese dogs



**your
dog**

YADKIN COUNTY



EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Yadkin County Fire Marshal's Office is proud to serve the citizens of Yadkin County by promoting the importance of fire safety through education, inspections, and investigations. The Fire Marshal's Office functions under the direction of the emergency services director.

The Fire Marshal's Office is responsible for various duties, which include:

- County Fire Inspection Program
- Fire / arson investigations
- Budget preparation
- Coordination between county government and county fire departments
- Fire prevention programs
- Response to emergency situations

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