



Yadkin County Fire Marshal's Office



June

Prevention Bulletin

2026



Safe Kids North Carolina, a statewide program, led by the North Carolina Department of Insurance Office of State Fire Marshal, is reminding parents and caregivers about important safety tips in an effort to reduce child drownings, near-drownings and entrapments in swimming pools, spas and other bodies of water. “With the approach of summer break and vacation season, many North Carolina families will be enjoying the water at the pool, lake or beach,” said Insurance Commissioner Mike Causey, chair of Safe Kids North Carolina. “It is important for parents and caregivers to be particularly cautious and take steps to avoid any potential tragedies.”



On average, there are 29 child drownings each year in North Carolina. Drowning is the leading cause of death for children 1-4 years of age nationally, with rates even surpassing those of traffic accident fatalities in recent years.

Safe Kids North Carolina reminds parents and caregivers to take the following precautions:

LOCK – Homeowners should put up a fence that is at least 4-feet high around all sides of a pool or spa with a locking gate that closes and latches by itself. Homeowners should cover and lock pools and spas when they are not using them, and also remove or lock ladders to above-ground pools and spas when not in use.

LOOK – Adults and caregivers must always watch children — whether the children know how to swim or not — when kids are in or near water without being distracted by phone calls, text messages, reading or talking to others. If a child is missing, look in the water first.

LEARN – Children and adults should know how to swim. Adults should learn how to use rescue equipment and correctly choose and use U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets. Caregivers should learn adult and infant CPR and teach children to never swim alone or swim near pool or spa drains.

For more detailed information about the water safety, go to <http://www.safekids.org/water-safety>



23 people lost their lives on North Carolina waters in 2021.

16 of them were NOT wearing a life vest.

Don't be a statistic. Wear your life vest.

PRESERVE
YOUR
LIFE

“We cannot stress how important it is for you to wear a personal floatation device, or PFD, while boating, whether it be recreating, swimming or fishing,” said Captain Branden Jones with the Wildlife Commission. “In 2021, 23 people lost their lives on North Carolina waters; 16 of them were not wearing a life vest. PFDs save lives, but they won’t work if you don’t wear them.”

New and novice boaters are urged to take the following precautions to ensure friends and family remain safe on the water:

- **Wear a life jacket or Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (PFD) at all times.** Put your life jacket on prior to entering the boat and make sure its snug, yet comfortable, and will not move above the chin or ears when lifted at the shoulders.
- **Appoint a designated driver for the boat.** Operating a boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs is illegal and is just as dangerous as driving a car impaired.
- **Assign an adult “[Water Watcher](#)” to actively supervise children in or around the water at all times.** Young children and people who are not strong swimmers should always be kept within arm’s reach.
- **Swim only in designated areas.** You are less visible to boaters and more vulnerable to accidents. Avoid diving in unfamiliar areas, as there may be hidden structures.
- **Throw, don’t go.** Be prepared to throw a floatation device or use a pole or tree branch to reach someone struggling in the water. Never jump in to save someone because you could go under too.
- **Attend a boater safety course.** The Wildlife Commission offers an array of [boating education classes](#). If you were born on or after January 1, 1988, you must complete an approved course before operating any vessel propelled by a motor of 10 HP or greater.

Vessel owners should also be aware of a new fire extinguisher law relevant to disposable fire extinguishers with a date of manufacture stamped on the bottle. “If the date stamp is older than 12 years, it’s now considered expired and must be removed from service and replaced with a 5-B or 20-B date stamped extinguisher,” Jones said. “Having a serviceable fire extinguisher is an imperative safety measure.”

Details about the new fire extinguisher law can be found on the agency’s [blog](#), and additional information about boating laws and safety can be found at ncwildlife.org/boating.

Preserve Your Life: Wear a Life Jacket

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission introduced the “Preserve Your Life” campaign in 2017 to raise awareness and educate the public about the importance of life jackets. Wearing a life jacket is a simple safety precaution that can prevent tragedy from happening in the event of an accident. There's no reason to not wear a life jacket. In the end, your life may literally depend on it.

Life jackets have seen drastic design improvements over the years. Newer models are not the bulky, hot floatation devices that some boaters remember. In fact, many life jackets are designed for specific activities such as fishing, water sports and even hunting. These specialized floatation devices grant the user the freedom to enjoy their day on the water in comfort.

It's important to put on your life jacket before heading out on the water. Even the strongest of swimmers can be incapacitated during an accident. In dire situations, there often isn't time to grab a life vest and put it on properly. It can save your life and can help you assist others who may be in danger.

Both North Carolina and federal regulations state that a personal floatation device in serviceable condition and of appropriate size should be accessible for each person onboard a vessel. [North Carolina requires anyone younger than 13 to wear an appropriate life vest when on a recreational vessel.](#)

Anyone riding a personal watercraft or being towed by one must also wear a Coast Guard-approved life vest.

Kids MUST Wear Life Vests

North Carolina law requires children younger than 13 years of age to wear an appropriate life vest whenever they are on a recreational vessel that is underway. When choosing a life vest for a child, always check for a U.S. Coast Guard approved label.

The life vest must be a proper fit, with youth sizes corresponding to weight ranges.

For more information about boating safety or to enroll in a free boating education course, go to www.ncwildlife.org.

BOATING SAFETY EDUCATION

WEAR IT!

The Wildlife Resources Commission is an Equal Opportunity Employer and all wildlife programs are administered for the benefit of all North Carolina citizens without regard to race, sex, color, religion or national origin. Violations of this pledge may be reported to the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, Equal Employment Office, Personnel Office, 1713 Varady Drive, Raleigh, NC 27606. Telephone (919)707-6200.

<https://www.ncwildlife.org/Boating/Laws-Safety/Preserve-Your-Life>

Prevent Hot Car Deaths

According to [Safe Kids Worldwide](#), even on a relatively mild 80-degree day, the temperature inside a car can rise 19 degrees in 10 minutes. Since a child's body heats up three to five times faster than an adult's, the risk of heat stroke, brain damage and death are much greater for children left in hot cars.

This means that only a few minutes can make the difference between life and death.



The Children's HealthSM Injury Prevention team reminds us that these incidents are avoidable and are often a result of life's typical distractions, parents being in a hurry and transporting their children outside of their typical routine. It can also happen when kids climb into an unlocked car.

If you are responsible for getting your child from place to place, keep these tips in mind for preventing hot car tragedies:

1. **Place an important item in the backseat.** Place your cell phone, briefcase, purse or other important items in the backseat before driving to your destination. This will get you in the routine of checking the backseat every day. If your vehicle has the option to set a rear seat reminder, this is a good option as well.
2. **Establish a peace-of-mind plan.** When you drop off your child, make a habit of calling or texting all other caregivers, so all of you know where your child is at all times.
3. **Check the car.** Before getting out of the car, check to be sure everyone is out and lock all doors. Thirty percent of the deaths in the U.S. have occurred when a child climbed into an unlocked vehicle.
4. **Lean on daycare providers.** Have a plan with your daycare providers. Ask them to call you if your child does not arrive on time, and they have not heard from you.
5. **Always keep your vehicles locked.** Vehicular heatstroke deaths in kids don't just happen when a parent forgets their child in a car. According to NHTSA, 26% of kids who die in cars are those who have entered an unlocked car themselves and gotten trapped. Speak with your family and neighbors about the importance of always keeping car doors locked, especially during the hot summer months.
6. **If you see a child alone in a car, dial 911 immediately.** Stay at the scene until police arrive.

Learn more from experts at Children's Health about keeping your family safe and making [summer smart](#).

NEVER leave a child alone in a car — even for a minute!



More than twenty children have died this year already.

- Dial 911 immediately if you see an unattended child in a car. EMS professionals are trained to determine if a child is in trouble.
- Never leave a child unattended in a vehicle, even with the window slightly open.

Believe it or not, routines and distractions have caused people to mistakenly leave children behind in cars.

- Place a cell phone, PDA, purse, briefcase, gym bag or whatever is to be carried from the car on the floor in front of a child in a backseat. This triggers adults to see children when they open the rear door and reach for their belongings.
- Set your cell phone or Blackberry reminder to be sure you dropped your child off at day care.
- Set your computer calendar program, such as Outlook, to ask, "Did you drop off at daycare today?"
- Have a plan that if your child is late for daycare that you will be called within a few minutes. Be especially careful if you change your routine for dropping off little kids at day care.

Prevent trunk entrapment.

- Teach children not to play in any vehicle.
- Lock all vehicle doors and trunk after everyone has exited the vehicle — especially at home. Keep keys out of children's reach. Cars are not playgrounds or babysitters.
- Check vehicles and trunks **FIRST** if a child goes missing.

Outside
Temperature

101° F

Inside Vehicle
Temperature

140° F

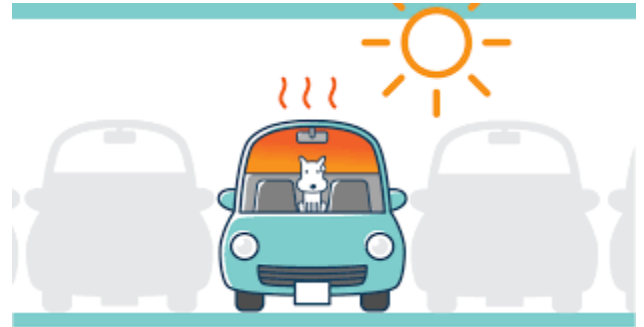


www.safekids.org

Every year, hundreds of pets die from heat exhaustion because they are left in parked vehicles.

The temperature inside your vehicle can rise almost 20° F in just 10 minutes. In 20 minutes, it can rise almost 30° F...and the longer you wait, the higher it goes. At 60 minutes, the temperature in your vehicle can be more than 40 degrees higher than the outside temperature. Even on a 70-degree day, that's 110 degrees inside your vehicle!

Your vehicle can quickly reach a temperature that puts your pet at risk of serious illness and even death, even on a day that doesn't seem hot to you. And cracking the windows makes no difference.



CAR TEMPERATURE PET SAFETY CHART

How long does it take for a car to get HOT?

Outside Temp (F)	Inside Temp (F)	
	10mins	30mins
70°	89°	104°
75°	94°	109°
80°	99°	114°
85°	104°	119°
90°	109°	124°
95°	114°	129°

DOGS DIE EVERY SUMMER
In minutes your car temps are deadly!

VeterinaryClinic.com



<https://www.ready.gov/pets>

National Pet Preparedness Month takes place in June and reminds pet owners to always prepare emergency plans for their animal friends so that they can weather emergency conditions safely. Pets are as much victims of natural and man-made disasters as humans and, therefore, owners must also be prepared to evacuate their pets with the supplies necessary for their needs.

Your pets are an important member of your family, so they need to be included in your family's emergency plan. To prepare for the unexpected follow these tips with your pets in mind:

1. Make a plan.
2. Build an emergency kit.
3. Stay informed.

Make a Plan

If you have a plan in place for you and your pets, you will likely encounter less difficulty, stress and worry when you need to make a decision during an emergency. If local officials ask you to evacuate, that means your pet should evacuate too. If you leave your pets behind, they may end up lost, injured or worse.

Things to include in your plan:

- **Have an evacuation plan for your pet.** Many public shelters and hotels do not allow pets inside. Know a safe place where you can take your pets before disasters and emergencies happen.
- **Develop a buddy system.** Plan with neighbors, friends or relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so.
- **Have your pet microchipped.** Make sure to keep your address and phone number up-to-date and include contact information for an emergency contact outside of your immediate area.
- **Contact your local emergency management office, animal shelter or animal control office** to get additional advice and information if you're unsure how to care for your pet in case of an emergency.

Build a Kit for Your Pet

Just as you do with your family's emergency supply kit, think first about the basics for survival, such as food and water. Have two kits, one larger kit if you are sheltering in place and one lightweight version for if you need to evacuate. Review your kits regularly to ensure that their contents, especially foods and medicines, are fresh.

Here are some items you may want to include in an emergency kit for your pet:

- **Food.** Keep several days' supply of food in an airtight, waterproof container.
- **Water.** Store a water bowl and several days' supply of water.
- **Medicine.** Keep an extra supply of the medicine your pet takes on a regular basis in a waterproof container.
- **First aid kit.** Talk to your veterinarian about what is most appropriate for your pet's emergency medical needs.

- **Collar with ID tag and a harness or leash.** Include a backup leash, collar and ID tag. Have copies of your pet's registration information and other relevant documents in a waterproof container and available electronically.
- **Traveling bag, crate or sturdy carrier,** ideally one for each pet.
- **Grooming items.** Pet shampoo, conditioner and other items, in case your pet needs some cleaning up.
- **Sanitation needs.** Include pet litter and litter box (if appropriate), newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags and household chlorine bleach to provide for your pet's sanitation needs.
- **A picture of you and your pet together.** If you become separated from your pet during an emergency, a picture of you and your pet together will help you document ownership and allow others to assist you in identifying your pet.
- **Familiar items.** Put favorite toys, treats or bedding in your kit. Familiar items can help reduce stress for your pet.

Tips for Large Animals

If you have pets such as horses, goats or pigs on your property, be sure to prepare before a disaster.

In addition to the tips above:

- Ensure all animals have some form of identification.
- Evacuate animals earlier, whenever possible. Map out primary and secondary routes in advance.
- Make available vehicles and trailers needed for transporting and supporting each type of animal. Also make available experienced handlers and drivers.
- Ensure destinations have food, water, veterinary care and handling equipment.
- If evacuation is not possible, animal owners must decide whether to move large animals to a barn or turn them loose outside.

Stay Informed

Being prepared and staying informed of current conditions. Here are some ways you can stay informed:

- **Pay attention to [wireless emergency alerts](#)** for local alerts and warnings sent by state and local public safety officials.
- **Listen to local officials** when told to evacuate or shelter in place.
- **[Download the FEMA app](#)** and get weather alerts from the National Weather Service, for up to five different locations anywhere in the United States.

THE TROUBLE WITH TICKS



American dog tick

GETTY IMAGES

N.C. TICKS THAT BITE HUMANS



CDC

AMERICAN DOG TICK

BEHAVIOR: Slow-moving and not as aggressive as the lone star tick. Only adults feed on people.

BITE: Usually not immediately painful or itchy, allowing it to go undetected longer.

HABITAT: Widely distributed east of the Rocky Mountains. Found in woods and overgrown fields. Second-most encountered tick in North Carolina.



BLACKLEGGED (DEER) TICK

BEHAVIOR: Smaller than other ticks that bite humans. Slow-moving and not aggressive.

BITE: Usually not painful or itchy while attached. All life stages will bite humans. Often called a deer tick for its favorite host, but other ticks also bite deer.

HABITAT: Usually found in pine forests and forests with lots of leaf litter. Needs high humidity.



BROWN DOG TICK

BEHAVIOR: Eggs are deposited in cracks and crevices near where dogs sleep.

BITE: Prefers to feed on dogs (check their ears or between toes) but will bite other big mammals.

HABITAT: Most widespread tick worldwide. Typically found in kennels and dog bedding. Can survive and reproduce indoors.



GULF COAST TICK

BEHAVIOR: Slow-moving, small to medium-sized.

BITE: Often leaves a scar. Prefers to attach around the ears, head or neck. Common livestock pest.

HABITAT: Commonly found within 150 miles of the Gulf of Mexico and southern Atlantic coast, but it has been found in the N.C. Piedmont and mountains. Likes grassland and forest edges.



LONE STAR TICK

BEHAVIOR: Aggressive and will feed on anything. Female has a white spot in the middle of her back.

BITE: Painful, itchy and may cause a circular rash. All stages will bite humans and pets. Bites humans more than any other tick in the East and South.

HABITAT: Shaded, wooded areas with low-growing vegetation. Cannot survive sun exposure for long.

AVOIDING TICKS

WHEN OUTDOORS

- Avoid wooded or brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.
- Walk in the center of trails.
- Wear long sleeves and pants, and tuck pants into socks.
- Check clothes, gear and body afterward, and shower ASAP.

ON YOUR PETS

- Do a tick check daily whenever they have been outside. Ticks and bites can be hard to spot under fur.
- Use a tick preventative on your dog. (Cats are more susceptible to chemicals, so check with your vet first.)

IN YOUR YARD

- Remove leaf litter, tall grass, brush, trash and debris.
- Place a 3-foot wide barrier of wood chips or gravel between lawns and wooded areas to keep ticks from migrating.
- Mow the lawn frequently.



GETTY IMAGES

FOUND A TICK?

REMOVE IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:

Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as you can and pull straight up with steady, even pressure. If you twist or jerk the tick, its mouth parts could break off and stay in the skin.

DISINFECT: Clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.

SAVE IT: Attach the tick to an index card, fully covered with clear tape, and write the date on it. This way, there's a record if you become ill.

LIVE TICK? Dispose of it by putting it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag or container and wrapping it tightly with tape, or flushing it down the toilet.

TICK DON'TS

- Never crush a tick with your fingers.
- Don't use a match to burn the tick off the skin or put any type of substance (like nail polish) on it — that could cause the tick to regurgitate more saliva and bacteria into the host.

HOW TICKS SPREAD DISEASE

► FIND A HOST

Ticks transfer to a person or animal when the new host brushes past their resting place on shrubs or the ends of grass blades. Some ticks will sit with a pair of legs outstretched to better grab on.

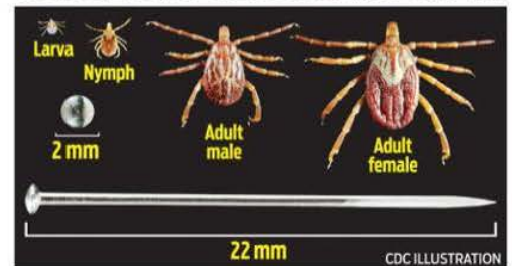
► ATTACH TO HOST

Some ticks attach quickly, but others will crawl around looking for thinner skin. When the tick decides to feed, it will grasp and cut into the skin, then insert its feeding tube. Some tubes have barbs to keep the tick anchored; other species secrete a sticky substance to keep them attached. Their saliva can contain an anesthesia to keep the bite undetected. If unnoticed, the tick can suck blood for days.

► FEED

As a tick feeds, it ingests any pathogens in the host's blood. Saliva can transfer from the tick to the host, transferring any diseases that the tick may carry. After feeding, most ticks will drop off.

TICK SIZES, BY LIFE STAGE (GULF COAST TICK)



CDC ILLUSTRATION

SOME NOTABLE TICK DISEASES

► ALPHA-GAL (RED MEAT) ALLERGY

SYMPTOMS: Hives or rash, nausea, stomach cramps, indigestion, vomiting, diarrhea, stuffy/runny nose, sneezing, headache. Can trigger potentially deadly anaphylaxis. Can be difficult to diagnose because reaction can take hours longer than for typical food allergies.

CARRIER TICK: Juvenile lone star tick. **TREATMENT:** Antihistamines and corticosteroids. Epinephrine for anaphylaxis. Avoidance of red meat.

► EHRLICHIOSIS

SYMPTOMS: Fever, headache, fatigue, muscle aches, conjunctival infection (red eyes). Can be fatal if not treated correctly.

CARRIER TICK: Lone star tick. **TREATMENT:** Doxycycline.

► LYME DISEASE

SYMPTOMS: Fever, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint aches, swollen lymph nodes. Characteristic expanding skin rash can have a "bull's eye" appearance. Can spread to joints, heart and nervous system. It's the most commonly reported tick-borne disease in the U.S.

CARRIER TICK: Blacklegged tick. **TREATMENT:** Antibiotics.

► POWASSAN VIRUS

SYMPTOMS: Fever, headache, vomiting, weakness, confusion, loss of coordination, speech difficulties and seizures. Many infected don't have any symptoms. Can cause encephalitis and meningitis. Former Sen. Kay Hagan developed encephalitis from this disease, which caused long-term neurological effects.

CARRIER TICK: Blacklegged tick. **TREATMENT:** No drug available.

► ROCKY MOUNTAIN SPOTTED FEVER

SYMPTOMS: Fever, headache, nausea, stomach pain, rash (though not always in early stages). Can rapidly become life-threatening. North Carolina is one of five states that account for 60 percent of cases.

CARRIER TICK: American dog tick. **TREATMENT:** Doxycycline.

NEW INVASIVE SPECIES IN NORTH CAROLINA



GETTY IMAGES

Five cattle in Surry County recently died from acute anemia because of infestations of **Asian longhorned ticks**, according to State Veterinarian Doug Meckes. One of the victims, a young bull, was infested with more than 1,000 ticks. This exotic tick from East Asia had not been found in the United States before its

identification in New Jersey in 2017 and was first found in North Carolina in 2018. It is an aggressive biter and a serious livestock pest in its native regions, but hasn't been linked to any human infection in the United States so far, Meckes said. As of June 24, this tick has been found in 11 states.

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

Ricky Leonard, Fire Marshal

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