



Cy-Fair Fire Department Shares Summer Vacation Safety Tips for Families

Cy-Fair Fire Department's Daniel Anderson shares tips to keep families safe while traveling this summer.

HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, May 29, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- There are some vacation mishaps that often happen when people travel. Somebody forgets to pack something. Someone ends up with a weird tan line. Or maybe it rains for a week straight. These things can be unpleasant, acknowledges Cy-Fair Fire Department's Daniel Anderson. But in the grand scheme of vacation mishaps, they're on the minor end of the spectrum. Before embarking on a trip this summer, Anderson urges all community members to take precautions against accidents and emergencies that would truly put an end to a family's fun.

"As summer approaches and families begin planning getaways near and far, CFFD would like to remind residents that a little preparation can go a long way in ensuring your trip is memorable for the right reasons," says Anderson, who is CFFD's district chief of suppression training. "Whether you're staying in the great state of Texas, road-tripping across state lines, or flying overseas, these travel safety tips help keep your vacation safe and stress-free."

Here are nine things to keep in mind while preparing for summer vacation:

Pack smart; pack safe. Make sure to pack a basic first aid kit, copies of important documents (like IDs, insurance cards, and a list of medications and allergies in case anyone traveling needs medical assistance), and a small flashlight or headlamp in case of power outages. Be sure to pack any items that might be difficult to replace at the destination, like spare contact lenses or prescription medications.

"Depending on your destination, accommodation type, and planned activities, you may want to pack items like personal alarms, doorstops, money belts, and RFID-blocking passport covers," Anderson says. "If you're driving, have your vehicle serviced before hitting the road and pack an emergency kit with water, blankets, and roadside supplies."

Be aware of carbon monoxide risks when traveling. Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas that can be deadly. Unlike smoke alarms, CO detectors are not legally required in every location, which might include hotels, resorts, or vacation rentals. The risks are even greater when traveling internationally because carbon monoxide detector requirements and regulations

differ significantly from country to country, making it difficult to rely on the safety measures in place at a hotel or other accommodation.

“Even if you believe your accommodations have installed carbon monoxide detectors, it’s a good idea to bring your own,” says Anderson. “Travel-sized, battery-operated models are available. Place them near where you are sleeping, like on a nightstand. And be aware that drafts and humidity can affect the detector’s ability to get an accurate reading, so try to keep them away from vents, open windows, or bathrooms.”

Know the address of the home-away-from-home. When vacationers have an emergency, the first thing dispatchers need is their location. Take a moment to write down or memorize the address of the hotel, resort, or rental. Keep it stored in a phone or on the lock screen for easy access. This saves precious time in the event of an emergency. Short response times can save lives.

“If you’re traveling internationally, know how to dial emergency services in the country you’re visiting—it’s not always 911,” reminds Anderson. “There may even be separate numbers for different services, such as fire, ambulance, and police. It’s also helpful to do some basic research ahead of time so that you know what emergency services are like in the country you’re visiting, and to determine whether to purchase travel insurance.”

Don’t forget fire safety—even on vacation. Every year, an estimated 3,900 fires break out in U.S. hotels and motels (<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/hotel-fires/>)—not to mention vacation rentals. Check for working smoke alarms at the hotel, resort, or vacation rental. Know two ways out of the room, especially in hotels or unfamiliar lodgings. Look for posted evacuation plans (in hotels, these are often on the back of the room door) and take a moment to get familiar with them.

“If you’re camping or renting a home with a grill or fire pit, follow the same fire safety precautions you would at home—never leave fires unattended and always extinguish them completely,” instructs Anderson.

Stay weather-aware. Check the forecast for the vacation destination—not just to a rain jacket is needed, but to determine if any major weather events are on the horizon. This is especially wise if traveling to a region prone to wildfires, hurricanes, or heat waves.

“While some people escape to cooler climes, for most people, summer vacation means sun and high temperatures,” Anderson notes. “If you’ll be outdoors hiking, swimming, or exploring an amusement park, bring plenty of water, sun protection, and extra snacks. Know the signs of heat exhaustion and dehydration, and seek shade or medical attention if symptoms appear.”

Use caution with unfamiliar appliances. If the lodging arrangements include gas stoves, heating units, or older appliances, be cautious. Don’t leave them running unattended and report any strange smells or issues to the property manager. If something doesn’t feel safe, don’t use it.

“Even smaller appliances like microwaves, toasters, hair dryers, and coffee makers can be a fire risk, especially if they are left unattended or are malfunctioning,” says Anderson. “To be on the safe side, unplug them before leaving your hotel room or rental.”

Don’t disable safety devices. Devices like smoke alarms, CO detectors, or door alarms in vacation rentals are a first line of defense in an emergency. If, for example, a smoke alarm is beeping intermittently—possibly due to a low battery—contact the property owner or manager for assistance rather than disabling the device.

“Please take the time to report the alarm to the host or front desk—don’t silence or remove it,” says Anderson. Your family’s safety is worth the extra time and effort. Plus, in many places, it’s illegal to tamper with safety devices like smoke detectors.”

Make sure children know what to do in an emergency. If traveling with children, make sure they know what to do in an emergency: how to find exits, how to call for help using 911 (or its international equivalent), how to identify staff or safe adults, and so on.

“Go over these details several times in advance and be as specific as you can,” advises Anderson. “Think about possible scenarios like, If we’re separated while we’re out and about, should we choose a meeting point where we can assemble? Would I rather my child stay in one spot until I find them? Or should they immediately look for a safe adult? The answers will likely vary depending on your location and your child’s age.

“One more thing to consider: Many parents find it reassuring to have their kids use a wearable tracking device (<https://www.safewise.com/resources/wearable-gps-tracking-devices-for-kids-guide/>) if they’ll be in a crowded area like an amusement park or city center,” Anderson adds. “A lower-tech option is to have your child keep a written copy of your phone number in their pocket, or even have it printed on a silicone bracelet they can wear.”

Don’t forget safety back home. It’s a good idea for vacationing families to take steps to keep their homes safe while they are away:

- Give a copy of the travel itinerary and contact information to a nearby friend, relative, or neighbor so they can get in touch if there’s trouble on the home front.
- Resist the temptation to post real-time vacation photos on social media. They advertise the fact that a family is out of town.
- Stop mail delivery and arrange with a neighbor or friend to pick up any packages that might arrive.
- Before leaving, double-check that all doors and windows are locked, appliances are turned off, and alarms are set.
- Consider putting a few lights on a timer so that the home looks occupied in the evenings.
- Don’t leave a spare key under a flowerpot, rock, or the doormat. Do leave one with a friend or neighbor.

- Unplug appliances and electronics. While fairly rare, it's always possible that a power surge or equipment failure could cause a fire.

"Most people think it won't happen to them, but every year CFFD responds to calls like home fires only to find that the homeowner is on vacation," says Anderson. "You can't prevent these emergencies altogether, but you can reduce their likelihood."

"As first responders, we want our community to enjoy the adventures summer brings—but we also want everyone to come home safely," says Anderson. "A few minutes of planning before you leave can prevent hours—or days—of problems later."

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About CFFD:

The Cy-Fair Fire Department (CFFD) provides professional fire and emergency medical services to the citizens of Northwest Harris County, Texas. From its beginnings in the late 1950s, the Cy-Fair FD is now one of the largest, busiest combination fire departments in the United States, with over 40,000 emergency responses each year. CFFD covers the 164-square-mile area of Harris County Emergency Services District #9 (HCESD9) in the unincorporated part of Northwest Harris County. Responding from 13 stations strategically located throughout the territory, the 550-plus men and women of the fire department are among the best trained and equipped firefighters, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), and dispatchers in the nation.

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