

# TREMONT SHELDON P.C.



## FIRE PIT/GRILL safety and TIPS



As it stays daylight longer and the weather is nicer, many people start to fire up their grills and fire pits. While these can be a great way to enjoy the outdoors, they also pose some safety risks.

Always supervise your grill or fire pit when it is in use. Never leave it unattended, even for a few minutes.

should be away from flammable materials, such as trees, bushes, and deck furniture. If you have a gas grill, be sure to keep it away from any structures that could catch fire. The NFPA also recommends that grills be at least 10 feet away from any structure.

Be sure to have a fire extinguisher or bucket of water nearby in case of an emergency. If you do have an accident, having a fire extinguisher or bucket of water nearby will help you to put out the fire quickly and safely. The NFPA recommends that all homes have a fire extinguisher that is rated for Class B fires, which are fires involving flammable liquids.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), there were an estimated 10,600 home fires started by grills in 2020. These fires caused an estimated 25 deaths, 115 injuries, and \$144 million in property damage.

Keep children and pets away from the grill or fire pit. They could easily get burned. In 2020, an estimated 11,500 children were treated in hospital emergency departments for burn injuries from grills.

Make sure the grill or fire pit is in a safe location. It



Never use gasoline or other accelerants to start a fire. This is a serious fire hazard. Gasoline and other accelerants can cause a fire to spread quickly and easily. The NFPA also warns against using charcoal starter fluid, as it can be explosive.

After you are finished using the grill or fire pit, be sure to extinguish the fire completely. Soak the ashes with water and stir them around to make sure they are completely wet. You should also allow the grill or fire pit to cool down completely before you store it.

As the weather warms up and more people start to get outside, it's important to remember to stay safe when biking. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, there were over 46,000 bicycle crashes in the United States in 2019, resulting in over 800 deaths.

### THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THINGS YOU CAN DO TO STAY SAFE WHEN BIKING:

- **WEAR A HELMET.** Helmets are the single most effective way to prevent head injuries in bicycle crashes. Make sure your helmet fits snugly and is comfortable to wear. At the beginning of the season, make sure there are no hairline fractures – when in doubt, purchase a new helmet. In addition, children 12 or under are required to wear a helmet by law in Connecticut.
- **OBEY THE RULES OF THE ROAD.** Just like drivers, cyclists must obey all traffic laws, including stop signs, red lights, and speed limits.
- **BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS.** Pay attention to other drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. Be prepared to stop or swerve to avoid hazards.



E. Chickering, c1898. Library of Congress

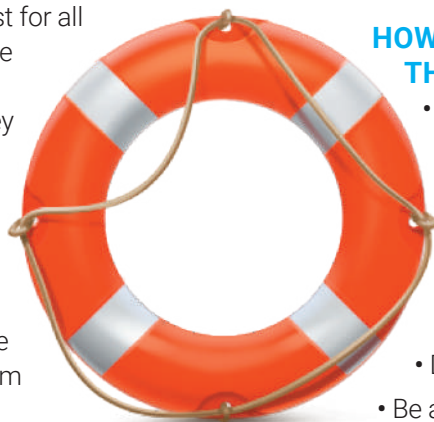
# SWIMMING SAFETY AND TIPS



## SWIMMING AND WATER SAFETY

Swimming is a great way to stay cool on a hot day, but it's important to be safe when swimming. Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death for children under the age of 14, and it's important to take steps to keep your children safe in the water. Here are some tips for swimming and water safety:

- **TEACH YOUR CHILDREN HOW TO SWIM.** This is the single most important thing you can do to keep your children safe in the water. Start teaching your children how to swim as early as possible, and make sure they practice regularly.
- **SUPERVISE YOUR CHILDREN CLOSELY.** Never leave your children unattended in the water, even for a few minutes. If you have to leave the pool area, take your children with you.
- **USE LIFE JACKETS.** Life jackets are a must for all children, especially young children and those who are not strong swimmers. Make sure your children wear life jackets whenever they are in or around the water.
- **BE AWARE OF THE DANGERS OF RIP CURRENTS.** Rip currents are powerful currents that can pull swimmers out to sea. If you see a rip current, don't try to swim against it. Instead, swim parallel to the shore until you escape the current, then swim back to shore.



- **CHECK THE WATER TEMPERATURE BEFORE SWIMMING.** Don't swim in water that is too cold or too hot. Cold water can cause hypothermia, and hot water can cause heat stroke.
- **DON'T DRINK ALCOHOL BEFORE SWIMMING.** Alcohol impairs judgment and coordination, and it can increase your risk of drowning.
- **BE AWARE OF THE SIGNS OF DROWNING.** Drowning can happen quickly and quietly. If you see someone who is struggling in the water, don't hesitate to call for help.

## DROWNING STATISTICS

- In the United States, there are an average of 10 drowning deaths per day.
- African American children are four times more likely to drown than white children.
- Boys are more likely to drown than girls.
- Most drownings occur in backyard pools.

## HOW TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE IN THE WATER

- Teach your children how to swim.
- Supervise your children closely.
- Use life jackets.
- Be aware of the dangers of rip currents.
- Check the water temperature before swimming.
- Don't drink alcohol before swimming.
- Be aware of the signs of drowning.



# SOCIAL HOSTING LAWS

**ONE OF THE MOST COMMON WAYS THAT UNDERAGE DRINKING LEADS TO INJURY IS THROUGH SOCIAL HOSTING.**

Social hosting occurs when an adult provides alcohol to minors or allows minors to drink alcohol in their home or on their property. While it may seem like a harmless way to let

your kids have a good time, social hosting can have serious legal and financial consequences.

In Connecticut, it is illegal for anyone to provide alcohol to a minor. This includes parents, guardians, and other adults. If you are caught providing alcohol to a minor, you could face criminal charges, including a fine of up to \$2,000 and up to one year in jail. You could also be held liable for any damages that are caused by the minor's intoxication, such as medical bills, property damage, and even death.

# TRAVEL AND HOTEL SAFETY TIPS

As Memorial Day and summer approaches, many people start to travel more. While this can be a great way to enjoy the spring and summer months, it's important to be aware of the potential dangers that can occur while traveling. Here are some travel and hotel safety tips from a personal injury attorney:

## PLANNING YOUR TRIP

The first step in staying safe while traveling is to plan your trip carefully. This means doing your research and making sure that you are aware of the potential dangers in the areas that you will be visiting. You should also make sure that you have a plan in case of an emergency.

## BOOKING YOUR TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

When booking your travel arrangements, it is important to use a reputable company. You should also make sure that you read the fine print before you book your trip. This will help you to avoid any surprises, such as hidden fees or cancellation penalties.

## MAKING COPIES OF YOUR IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

It is always a good idea to make copies of your important documents, such as



your passport, driver's license, and travel insurance information. This way, if your documents are lost or stolen, you will have a backup copy.

## KEEPING YOUR VALUABLES SAFE

It is important to keep your valuables safe while traveling. This means not leaving them unattended in your hotel room or in your car. You should also consider using a safe deposit box at your hotel or a travel safe.

## BEING AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS

It is important to be aware of your surroundings while traveling. This means being careful when walking around unfamiliar areas and not being afraid to ask for help if you need it. You should

also trust your instincts. If something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.

## BEING PREPARED FOR EMERGENCIES

It is always a good idea to be prepared for emergencies while traveling. This means having a plan in case of a medical emergency, lost luggage, or other unexpected event.

## STAYING SAFE IN HOTELS

In addition to the general safety tips listed here, there are a few things you can do to stay safe in hotels:

- Check the hotel's security features before you book. Look for things like security cameras, deadbolt locks, and a secure entryway.
- Ask for a room on a high floor. This will make it more difficult for someone to break into your room.
- Don't open the door to anyone you don't know. If you're not expecting someone, don't open the door. If you're not sure who it is, you can always ask them to identify themselves.
- Be careful when using the hotel's gym or pool. Make sure you're aware of your surroundings and don't leave your belongings unattended.

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In addition to the criminal penalties, social hosting can also have civil consequences. If a minor is injured while under the influence of alcohol that was provided to them by a social host, the minor or their parents may be able to file a civil lawsuit against the social host. In these cases, the social host could be held liable for the minor's medical expenses, lost wages, pain and suffering, and other damages.

The bottom line is that social hosting is a risky proposition. If you are caught providing alcohol to minors, you could face serious legal and financial consequences. If you are concerned about underage drinking, there are a number of things you can do to help prevent it. You can talk to your kids about the dangers of alcohol, you can monitor their behavior, and you can provide them with alternative activities to do instead of drinking.

## HERE ARE SOME STATISTICS ON UNDERAGE DRINKING IN CONNECTICUT:

- In 2018, there were 1,237 alcohol-related crashes in Connecticut involving drivers under the age of 21. These crashes resulted in 10 deaths and 248 injuries.
- In 2018, 25% of high school students in Connecticut reported having consumed alcohol in the past month.
- In 2018, 10% of high school students in Connecticut reported having been drunk in the past month.
- Underage drinking costs Connecticut taxpayers an estimated \$1.5 billion each year.



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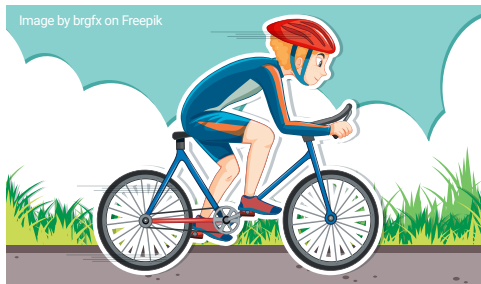
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*Bike Safety continued from page 1*

- **USE LIGHTS AND REFLECTORS DURING DAY AND NIGHT.** Lights and reflectors make you more visible to drivers, especially at dusk and night. Blinking lights on the front and back of your bike are great and can easily be purchased on Amazon.
- **WEAR BRIGHT CLOTHING** such as yellow, pink, or orange and make sure everything is tight fitting so it does not get caught in the wheels.

**IF YOU ARE INVOLVED IN A BICYCLE CRASH**, it's important to seek medical attention immediately. Even if you don't think you're injured, it's important to be checked out by a doctor. You may have injuries that aren't immediately apparent. You should also report the crash to the police just like you would with a car crash.

*Travel and Hotel Safety continued from page 3*

- Lock your room door when you leave. Even if you're just going to be gone for a few minutes, it's important to lock your door.
  - Don't forget to take your valuables with you when you leave your room. This includes things like your passport, money, and jewelry.
  - Be aware of scams. There are a number of scams that target travelers. Be on the lookout for things like people offering to help you with your luggage or people trying to sell you things on the street.
- By following these tips, you can help to stay safe while traveling and staying in hotels.**

## AREAS OF PRACTICE

All Personal Injury Claims Including: Car/Motorcycle Accidents • Child Sexual Abuse • Medical Malpractice • Falls • Dog Bites • Workers' Compensation. For a complete list, please visit our website.

*All materials in this newsletter are for purposes of general information only – nothing in the newsletter should be considered legal advice. Individuals are urged to seek the advice of an attorney before taking any action on matters reviewed in this newsletter.*