



News Release

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Summer Alcohol Safety: Heat and Alcohol Can Be a Dangerous Mix

The Dangers of Drinking Outdoors on Hot Weather Days

PORTLAND, Ore. – Summer is still two days away but Oregon is already experiencing summer like weather which is why the Oregon Liquor & Cannabis Commission (OLCC) is reminding people enjoying the outdoors this summer to stay safe by avoiding risks associated with consuming alcohol in hot weather.

Outdoor camping, concerts, festivals, and other activities are beginning to pick up across the state. During these warm-weather months, alcohol consumption often increases while enjoying outdoor activities, where people may be outside in the heat for extended periods of time. Spending even a short amount of time outdoors in excessive heat can be dangerous by itself, but when alcohol is added to the mix, the health risks are even greater.

It's important to be aware that as the heat index increases, the need to stay hydrated increases, and because drinking alcoholic beverages increases dehydration, they aren't a substitute for beverages like water that can help hydrate during hot weather.

"Alcohol can impair judgment and increase the risk of injuries. It can also make you more susceptible to the effects of cold-water immersion, which can lead to hypothermia. This is why alcohol and summer activities like swimming and boating do not mix," said Arnaud Simon, OLCC Public Health & Consumer Protection Policy Analyst.

If you're serving alcohol at a summer gathering, be sure to:

- Provide a variety of healthy foods and snacks. Food can slow the absorption of alcohol and reduce the peak level of alcohol in the body.
- Offer alternative beverages such as water, juices, or flavored sparkling water.
- Help your guests get home safely—use designated drivers, ride-hailing services, or taxis.

When outdoors in hot temperatures, drink lots of water, take breaks from the sun (indoors or in the shade), wear sunscreen and a hat, and limit time under the midday sun.

According to the National Weather Service, anyone who starts to feel dizzy, lightheaded, or sick should get out of the sun and find a cooler environment to rest and drink water; seek medical attention immediately if a person vomits more than once or if symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour.

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