

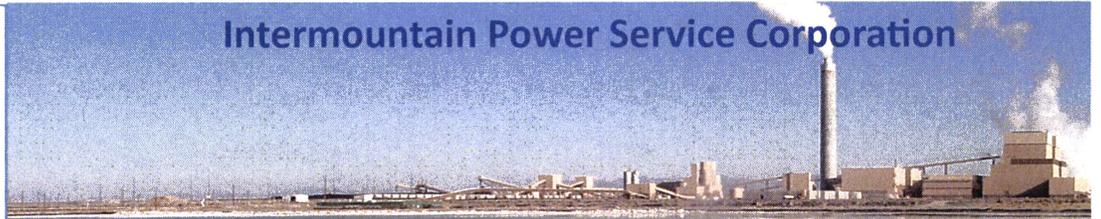
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Sun Protection

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Supervising Safety Newsletter

The weather is warm and outside activities are in full swing. It's time to have some fun in the sun. However, if proper precautions aren't taken, this fun in the sun could end up causing pain and suffering. Some people will pay immediately with a painful sunburn, while others might end up paying later in life with a form of skin cancer. The sun doesn't play favorites. The sun will affect everyone one way or another, especially if we do not protect ourselves from it.

Staying safe from the sun and UV rays is easy if we follow a few simple steps.

- **Avoid sunburns.** Five or more sunburns double the risk of developing skin cancer.
- **Avoid sun tanning and tanning beds.** UV light from tanning beds and the sun cause skin cancer.
- **Apply lots of sunscreen.** Use sunscreen on exposed skin. Your sunscreen should have a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. The higher the SPF, the greater the protection. Broad spectrum sunscreens are highly recommended.
- **Re-apply sunscreen.** Sunscreen should be applied at least every 2 hours and even more often when swimming or sweating.
- **Check sunscreen.** Look for the expiration date on sunscreen. Sunscreen without an expiration date has a shelf life of no more than three years, but its shelf life can be even shorter if the sunscreen has been exposed to high temperatures.
- **Wear protective clothing.** Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses when possible.
- **Find shade.** Protect yourself from the sun by finding shade under a tree, umbrella, or any other kind of shelter that will give relief from the sun's rays.
- **Limit exposure.** UV rays are most intense between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. If your shadow is shorter than you, the sun's rays are the day's strongest.



Remember, just because you are tan does not mean that you are protected from a sunburn or skin damage.

It is also important to examine your body monthly because skin cancers detected early can almost always be cured. The most important warning sign is a spot on the skin that is changing in size, shape, or color during a period of one month to one or two years.

Skin cancers often take the following forms:

- Pale, wax-like, pearly nodules.
- Red, scaly, sharply-outlined patches.
- Sores that don't heal.
- Small, mole-like growths—melanoma—the most serious type of skin cancer.

If you find any unusual skin changes, see a health care professional immediately.

Protecting ourselves from the sun and UV rays is important year round, not just during the summer. Harmful UV rays can reach us on cloudy and hazy days as well, so remember to protect yourself at all times and go enjoy the great weather.

Sources: www.cdc.gov/Prevention; www.osha.gov/Protecting Yourself From the Sun; www.girlshealth.gov/The Environment and Your Health