EuroSafe
European Association for Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion

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Latest News

World Drowning Prevention Day 2024

Thursday July 25 is World Drowning Prevention Day which this year has the theme '*Seconds can Save a Life*'.
Organised by the World Health Organization (WHO), the day aims to highlight that while drowning can happen in seconds, safety measures to prevent drowning also only take seconds to do. Simple actions such as putting on a lifejacket, telling someone before you leave for a swim or boating excursion, checking the weather conditions, choosing not to consume alcohol or drugs before entering the water, and keeping an eye on children while they play in the water, can save lives.
Globally, an estimated 236,000 people drown every year. Drowning is among the ten leading causes of death for children aged 5-14 years.

UN urges action on road deaths

This month saw the launch of the UN global road safety campaign #MakeASafetyStatement which aims to promote road safety and create safe, inclusive, and sustainable streets worldwide.
The UN says this call to action amplifies the message of the New Decade of Action for Road Safety, which aims to halve the number of road deaths and injuries by 2030.
Road collisions are the leading cause of death for children and young adults aged 5-29. Drink-driving, speeding, drowsiness, carelessness, non-use of seat belts and helmets, negligence and non-compliance with the Highway Code are responsible for most road accidents.
However, according to the WHO Global status report on road safety 2023, more progress also needs to be made through legislation and safety standards.

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EU commits to safer cycling

The European Union has adopted what's been called the "most ambitious" EU initiative on cycling to date – the *European Cycling Declaration*.

The declaration pledges to significantly increase safe cycling infrastructure across Europe by ensuring: space for cyclists in road design; physical separation of cycle paths from motorised traffic where relevant; and implementing safe speeds in mixed traffic.

It also promises enhanced enforcement of road safety rules and legislation with a focus on protecting cyclists, and an increase in cycle training for children and young people supported by awareness-raising campaigns on road safety and the safe use of e-bikes.

The collection of cycling data from across the EU will also be improved to ensure effective implementation of the commitments in the declaration.

Keep cool as temperatures soar

With temperatures expected to soar across the WHO European Region this summer WHO Europe's #KeepCool campaign is raising awareness about the dangers of extreme heat and provides simple guidance on how everybody can stay safe.

Heat stress is the leading cause of climate-related death in the region. Temperature extremes can also exacerbate chronic conditions, including cardiovascular, respiratory and cerebrovascular diseases, and diabetes-related conditions.

However, WHO Europe says the adverse health effects of hot weather are largely preventable through good public health practices.

Road safety reports published

The European Road Safety Observatory has published a series of thematic reports on road safety covering topics such as the effectiveness of protective equipment like cycle helmets, seat belts and child restraint systems; cycling; driver distraction; novice drivers; senior drivers; and the main factors causing fatal crashes in the EU. The reports aim to provide road safety practitioners with qualitative analysis and an overview of the latest research on each topic.
In 2018, the EU set a target for a 50% reduction in road deaths and serious injuries by 2030. However, a recent review found without more action these targets are unlikely to be reached. Around 20,400 people were killed in road collisions in the EU in 2023.

Stay safe during summer of sport

The 2024 Paris Olympics is set to dominate this summer and many children will be tempted to try out new sports. Sports injuries are common, particularly when trying new activities. Data from the European Injury Database (EU-IDB), which is coordinated by EuroSafe, shows the frequency of sports accidents increases from the age group 5-9 years and peaks in the age group 10-14 years. Fractures are by far the main types of injuries for all sports, followed by sprain and/or contusion injuries and injuries to muscles and tendons.
Of course, prevention is better than cure, so parents are urged to ensure children taking part in sports have the right supervision, training and equipment, stay hydrated and warm-up and wind down properly whatever sport they are participating in.

Fire safety for over 65s

Interventions to improve home fire safety behaviour among the over 65s should be tailored to that specific age group and acknowledge their susceptibility to domestic home fires, new research concludes. Researchers interviewed 4,400 older adults about their knowledge of fire safety and found many lacked detailed knowledge about risk behaviours that might cause a fire.

To address this, the research team developed *Fire Safety at Home* – an interactive educational programme which focuses on four of the most common fire causes among older adults – cooking, charging electronical devices, connecting power strips and the tumble dryer lint filter. Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness found it had more effect on positively influencing behaviours than current fire safety programmes (based on those used by the Dutch Fire Service).

Pedestrian risk from electric cars

Pedestrians may be twice as likely to be hit by electric/hybrid cars as petrol/diesel ones because of how quiet electric vehicles are, a study of casualty rates in Great Britain has found.

Researchers looked at data from 2013-17 and found the average annual casualty rates of pedestrians per 100 million miles of road travel were 5.16 for electric and hybrid vehicles and 2.40 for petrol and diesel vehicles. Collisions with pedestrians were, on average, twice as likely with electric and hybrid vehicles and three times as likely in urban areas where background ambient noise levels are higher than in rural areas. Mitigation of this hazard is needed amid the phase-out of fossil-fuelled vehicles, say researchers.