

# 2010 July

## Unintentional Injuries (Accidents)

Unintentional injuries cause about 60 deaths among Yolo County residents each year.



Yolo County kayaker shoots Mad Mike rapid, Cache Creek. Courtesy Andrew Fulks.

Unintentional injuries are a significant cause of emergency room visits, hospitalizations and deaths in Yolo County. These injuries are often preventable and are costly in terms of medical bills and human suffering. The most common causes of unintentional injuries in Yolo County are falls, motor vehicle accidents, and accidental drug overdoses (both prescription and non-prescription).<sup>28,33</sup>

As demonstrated by the kayaker above, appropriate safety devices—helmets, flotation devices, child car seats, seat belts—when used correctly, can prevent injury and save lives. Enjoy life, but be safe and make sure those with you stay safe.

Prevent poisoning by using medications as directed. Most importantly, keep all medications and cleaning products out of reach of children.

| Average Annual Deaths and Non-Fatal Hospitalizations due to Leading Causes of Unintentional Injury, Yolo County Residents <sup>28</sup> | Non-Fatal Hospitalization | Death |
|---|---------------------------|-------|
| Fall (refer to page 46)   | 367                       | 14    |
| Motor vehicle occupant  | 143                       | 24    |
| Pedestrian  | 14                        | 3     |
| Bicyclist   | 36                        | 1     |
| Motorcyclist  | 26                        | 3     |
| Poisoning (mostly prescription or illicit drug overdose)  | 46                        | 10    |

### Disaster Education & Awareness Month • UV Safety Month

| Sun                   | Mon                        | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 27                    | 28                         | 29  | 30  | 1   | 2   | 3   |
| 4<br>Independence Day | 5<br><i>County Holiday</i> | 6   | 7   | 8   | 9   | 10  |
| 11                    | 12                         | 13  | 14  | 15  | 16  | 17  |
| 18                    | 19                         | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  |
| 25                    | 26                         | 27  | 28  | 29  | 30  | 31  |

#### Motor Vehicle Accidents (MVA)

Compliance with seat belt laws and child car seat laws, crackdowns on drunk driving, and advances in automobile safety technology, are credited with notable declines in MVA deaths and injuries, especially among children. Gas prices and the economy may also play a role the recent decrease in MVA deaths simply because Americans are logging fewer miles on the road.<sup>44</sup> However, in Yolo County and the U.S., car crashes remain the leading cause of death for children and young adults.<sup>14,28</sup> Alcohol-related car crashes account for almost one third (32%) of all car crashes in the U.S.<sup>14</sup>

In California, all babies and young children must ride in the back seat, properly buckled up, in a safety seat or booster until they are at least 6 years old or weigh 60 pounds.<sup>53</sup> Nationwide, over 98% of child safety seats are installed incorrectly. The Yolo County Health Department offers car seat safety inspections to all Yolo County residents. Of 122 child safety seats inspected in 2009, only one was installed correctly! Car seats are inspected on an appointment only basis by calling (530) 666-8645.<sup>69</sup>

#### Unintentional Injury Age-Adjusted Death Rate

U.S. Goal = 17 per 100,000 or lower

- Yolo Co. 36 per 100,000<sup>36</sup>
- California 35 per 100,000<sup>36</sup>

#### Motor Vehicle Accident Age-Adjusted Death Rate

U.S. Goal = 8 per 100,000 or lower

- Yolo Co. 12 per 100,000<sup>36</sup>
- California 11 per 100,000<sup>36</sup>

#### Lead Poisoning<sup>70</sup>

From January of 2007 through July of 2009, 108 Yolo County children had elevated lead levels and 6 cases of lead poisoning occurred. Even low levels of lead can cause harm to a child's brain development. Lead can be found in paint and imported candies. Children should have a lead blood screening test at 12 and 24 months.

#### Water Safety

Drowning is a leading cause of injury-related death for children under 6 years of age in the U.S.<sup>13</sup> About 70 children under age 6 drown in California each year.<sup>28</sup> Between 2000 and 2007, 3 Yolo County children under age 6 drowned.<sup>28</sup> Prevent children from drowning by ensuring adult supervision at all times when around water and have a safety barrier that surrounds pools and spas. Children should always wear approved flotation devices when swimming or boating. Adults can set a good example for children by wearing approved flotation devices, especially in rivers and lakes, and by avoiding alcohol when swimming.

- Water Safety
- Fall Prevention
- California Office of Traffic Safety
- California Buckle-Up Laws for Parents

- [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org) and [www.ndpa.org](http://www.ndpa.org)
- [www.stopfalls.org](http://www.stopfalls.org)
- [www.ots.ca.gov](http://www.ots.ca.gov)
- [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org)