

# Misaskim Cares

A PUBLIC SERVICE PUBLICATION | SUMMER 5773 | VOL. X

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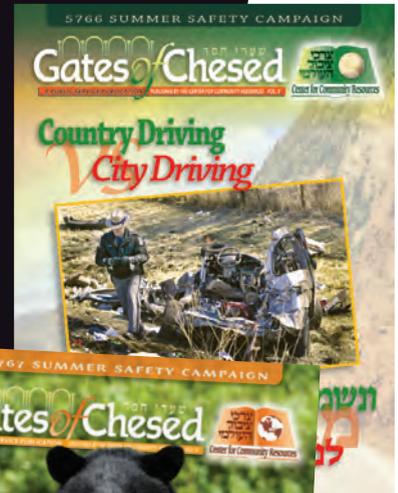
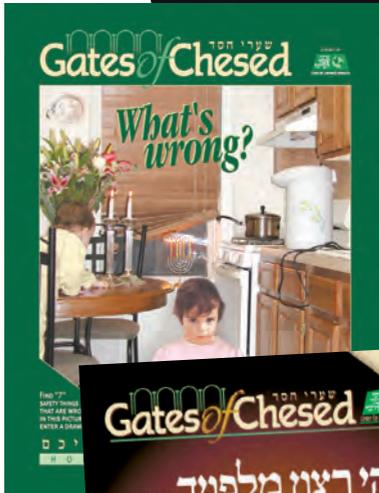
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# Welcome to Misaskim Cares

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Misaskim invites you to partner with us in bringing these safety messages to every home in the communities we represent. Limited sponsorship opportunities are available in our upcoming Misaskim Cares fall issue.

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Our homes fill many of our needs. It offers us protection and it provides us with a place that is warm, comforting and secure. Our homes give us a feeling of independence. For the maturing population, it also serves as a place of memories and a place of family gatherings. However, as our parents get older it is only natural that we concern ourselves with their safety and wellbeing.

The question then arises, when will you know when your elderly parents need help? One thing is certain; your parents won't be the ones who tell you they need help! As we age, our senses of sight, touch, hearing and smell tend to decline. It becomes more difficult to stretch, lift and bend. Home accidents are a major source of injuries. A simple fall can become a serious injury that limits independence.

To try and avoid problems you should start to monitor your parents' physical and mental abilities and research your care options should your parents begin to show signs of needing assistance. Are your parents having difficulty with or are incapable of performing routine activities of daily living (ADLs) such as bathing, dressing, toileting, walking or moving from place to place?

Have you noticed changes in their physical appearance? A loss in weight could indicate difficulty cooking, eating or shopping for food. Black and blue marks could indicate that they've fallen or are having trouble walking. Look around your parents' home. Burned pots and pans could indicate that they forgot about food on the stove. Unopened mail and unpaid bills may be a sign that they are having difficulty completing regular tasks.

If you notice memory lapses such as things are frequently being misplaced, they are unable to complete sentences and they cannot recall the names of familiar people then they may be developing dementia, Alzheimer's or some other cognitive impairment.

Some of these issues simply require a common sense approach. Minimize the danger of falls by removing tripping hazards such as area rugs and extension cords that are improperly located. Make sure that night lights are in place. Put together a list of prescriptions and over-the-counter medications including doses and schedules. Medication mistakes often lead to various health issues.

If you believe your parents are experiencing one or more of the above indicators and you feel that they need help in order to remain at home,

than the next step is to talk with them about their care needs. It's very important that your parents share in the decision to seek help and decide which option best meets their care and assistance needs. An assisted living facility or a nursing home will not afford them the option of remaining in their own home, surrounded by their friends and family on a daily basis. Home care is the primary and most cost-effective means of allowing your loved one to maintain their independence in the comfort of their own home.

Home care can range from a few hours a day to 24/7 attention. It will maximize their quality of life and perhaps even extend it, without having them leave their home. The question to ask yourself is, should I use a home care agency or hire someone on my own. If you hire someone you will become an employer. That entails finding qualified aides, checking their references, doing your own payroll and taxes, securing backup aides and overseeing the daily plan of care of your loved one.

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לכבוד אחינו בני ישראל,

In *Tehillim (74:17)* we read, "You established the boundaries of earth, summer and winter." As the summer approaches, we prepare to rejuvenate and refresh ourselves in mind and body, as well as to elevate our level of *ruchmiyus*.

We learn (*Shemos 15:22*) that after the Bnai Yisroel left the shores of the Yam Suf, "they went for three days in the Midbar and they didn't find water." Chazal tell us (*Bava Kamma 82a*), that water is Torah. It is impossible for a person to go more than three days without Torah and it was therefore instituted that the Torah should be read on Shabbos, Monday and Thursday so there is no period longer than three days that will elapse without Torah learning.

As we move forward into our summer mode, we want to ensure that our "*bein hazmanim*" is replete with Torah and *mitzvos*. It is a time that can be infused with great *aliyah* and one must make the appropriate preparations and efforts to achieve that goal.

The summer time is also a *zeman shelitas hateva*, when the forces of *gashmiyus* are more prevalent. We are reminded to take extra measures to safeguard the healthfulness of our *ruchmiyus* on a personal and familial level by arranging a suitable environment and providing suitable supervision at all times.

During this time of year, it is important to be especially mindful of the *mitzvah* of *v'nishmartem me'od l'nafshoseichem*, as we engage in activities that are perhaps more fraught with danger.

- Always wear the appropriate protective gear while biking, riding scooters, and the like.
- Maintain vigilant supervision of children in pool areas, and any other bodies of water, big and small.
- On the road, always wear seatbelts, drive within the speed limit, and adhere to the rules of defensive driving.
- Children should not be left unsupervised in playground areas.
- Make sure that you are adequately protected from the sun.
- When the weather is extremely hot and the body is losing water through perspiration, make sure that you are drinking enough water to avoid dehydration.

The Chazon Ish noted that during *bein hazemanim*, when the *limud* is not as strong, he found that he had to exert himself even more in learning. If the Chazon Ish found himself in such a predicament, certainly we should make sure to cultivate and improve our *avodas Hashem* during these auspicious days.

With best wishes for a pleasant summer – *bracha v'hatzlacha*.

Rav Dovid Goldwasser

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# געוואלד - בל תשחית!

בס"ד

## אויסצוגן פון א בריוו, גע'חתמ'ט דורך גדולי ישראל:

ל'צערינו, איז עס היינט אן אפטע ערשיינונג, אז ביי רוב שמחות וסעודות מצוה, ווערט א געוואלד מיט עסענווארג, אוועק געווארפן. צענליגער אדער הונדריטער ריינע גאנצע חלות, ווי אויך ריינע פארציעס פון בשר בהמה אדער עוף, פיש, א.ד.ג. גיין לאיבוד. (און פיל מאל, זענן די אלע ערדיכט געווארן, מיט גרויס מי און אנשטרענגונג). די איסורים פון "בל תשחית" און "בזיון אוכלים", זענען שוין כמעט פארגעסן געווארן, צווישן אונז היימישע אידען.

און דאס אלעס קומט פאר, בשעת עס זענען דא פיל משפחות עניים, און מוסדות התורה, וואס וואלטן געקענט נהנה זיין פון די עסענווארג, להחיות בהם נפשם, ונפש עולליהם.

וועלכע ערליכער איד, וויל דען נישט, אז פון די שיריים פון זיין שמחה, זאלן הנאה האבן, עניים הגונים אדער מוסדות החינוך. דער זכות איז דאך געוואלדיג גרויס, חוץ פון דער עצם זכות, זיך צו ראטעווען, פון די איסור "בל תשחית" און "בזיון אוכלים".

דא אונטען, שטעלן מיר פאר, כמה עצות למעשה, ווי אזוי ניצול צו ווערען, פון די איסורים. ולהשומעים יונעם, ותבא עליהם ברכה.

### עצות למעשה

מען זאל מסדר זיין מיט די קעטערער פון פאראויס, אז ער זאל שטרענג אנוואגן די ראש המחלקים, אוס צו פירן די אלע אנווייניגען, און אז אלעס וואס בלייבט איבער, זאל ווערען איינגעפאקט אין "בעקעלעך", וואס וועלן זיין אנגעגרייט דערויף, און זאל גוט אוועקגעלייקט ווערן.

די בעלי שמחה זאלן אליין אהיים נעמען די "בעקעלעך", אדער אויס טיילן פאר נצרכים. דא אונטען, וועט איר טרעפן טלפון נומערן, פון מוסדות אדער יחידים, וואס זענען גרייט, און אויך צוגעוואוינט, צו טיילען שיריים פון שמחות, פאר מוסדות אדער נצרכים.

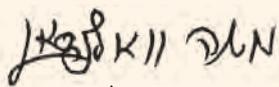
\* מען זאל נישט טיילן פולע טעלערס פאר יעדער, נאר מען זאל ביי יעדן פלאץ אנגרייטן לידיגע טעלערס, און די מחלקים זאלן ארומגיין טיילן פאר יעדער, נאר דאס וואס ער וועלט זיך אויס צו עסען. (FRENCH SERVICE) (פיל מענטשען מיינען אז דער אופן קאסט מער, אבער די פאקט האט געוויזן, אז דורך דעם איז די ארבעט פון די מחלקים גרינגער, און רוב קעטערעס נעמען נישט מער דערפאר).

\* מען זאל נישט אנגרייטן א גרויסע חלה ביי יעדען פלאץ, נאר אינמיטען טיש זאל מען לייגן, קליינע חלות ווי אויך גרעסערער, כדי אז נאר דער וואס האלט זיך ביים וואשן און בענטשען, זאל קענען נעמען דעם סארט חלה, וואס ער האפט צו ענדיגן.

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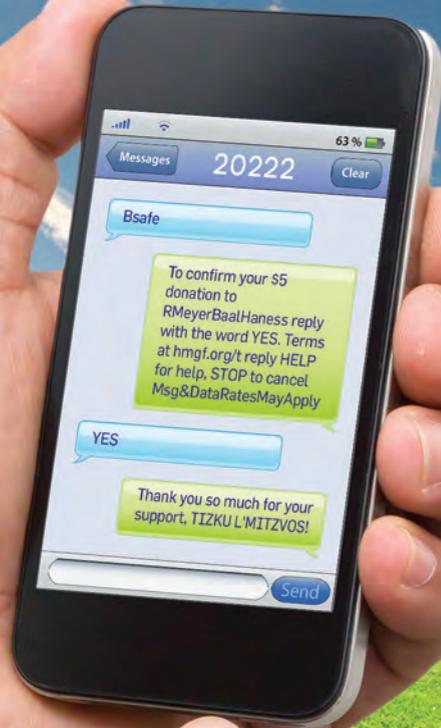
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# State Troopers

## Traffic Safety Guidelines

**MOTORISTS ARE REQUIRED TO OBSERVE CONSTRUCTION ZONE SPEED LIMITS AT ALL TIMES, EVEN THOUGH CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY OR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS ARE NOT PRESENT AT THE TIME.**

In preparation for the community's yearly exodus from sweltering Brooklyn to the fresh country air upstate, Misaskim spoke with members of the New York State Police regarding traffic safety guidelines for everyone traveling on country roads and highways.

The NYSP was created in 1917 to provide police protection to rural areas in the state. From its modest inception, originally consisting of 237 troopers patrolling on horseback, and nowadays serving as a large and sophisticated force, its vision has been to "serve, protect and defend the people while preserving the rights and dignity of all." Part of the NYSP mission is to improve highway safety in rural areas through education and strict enforcement of traffic laws.

Indeed, the numbers tell a story of success. Recent statistics have shown that state troopers issue over 900,000 tickets each year, and although they comprise only about 6% of NY's total law enforcement personnel, state troopers account for 30% of all DWI arrests, 47% of all citations for occupant restraints, and 55% of all speeding tickets in the state.

Misaskim spoke with Captain Jamie J. Kaminski, Zone Commander of the NYSP in Liberty, NY and Sergeant Michael Schroeder. In a wide ranging discussion, the officers offered tips on a variety of topics, including safely navigating rural roadways, adhering to child restraint guidelines, and driving through areas that are under road construction.



## Advance Preparation

Captain Kaminski says that preparation for navigating upstate roadways begins before leaving home. “Motorists should have their vehicle checked by a reputable and competent mechanic to ensure that the vehicle is in proper operating condition.” He reminds motorists to make sure that their vehicle has a valid NYS inspection certificate and strongly recommends that drivers pay special attention to the vehicle’s braking system and radiator coolant system. He explains that very often, unfortunately, the first indication of a problem with an inadequate coolant system occurs when a driver is stranded in the blazing heat in an overheated vehicle on the Wurtsboro Mountain in Sullivan County.

The officers stressed the need for drivers to be prepared to adapt their driving techniques in order to compensate for the very different characteristics of mostly straight and level city streets, as compared to the hills and curves that are characteristic of country roadways and upstate driving. In addition, the captain warns drivers to be especially vigilant when encountering hilly roadways with “blind crests.” He says that it is imperative to keep right of the roadway in those areas in order to avoid unseen oncoming traffic.

All too often, even before they get behind the wheel, drivers are unaware that their licenses may have been suspended. Captain Kaminski explained that licenses can be revoked for a number of reasons, including summonses that have been ignored, excessive speeding tickets within a short period of time, and even unpaid parking tickets.

Another largely unrecognized cause of license suspensions stems from auto insurance lapses. “When people receive a letter informing them that their insurance has lapsed, they do



not realize that their license and registration have subsequently been suspended,” says Sgt Schroeder. Insurance companies are required by law to report the names of individuals whose insurance payments are in arrears, and they do it promptly. He advises everyone to avoid this problem by making sure that insurance payments are made on time.

## Occupant Restraints

One of the greatest safety features in the vehicle is also the most simple to employ. New York State law requires the driver and all front-seat passengers to wear seatbelts. In addition, proper restraints are mandatory for all backseat passengers under the age of 16. Follow all the height and weight guidelines for proper child seats or booster seats. Penalties for seatbelt and car seat violations include points on the license and a heavy fine. For total guidelines, see the sidebar.

## Move Over Law

New York State’s Move Over Law requires motorists to move over to the next lane when approaching emergency vehicles. Included under this law are the vehicles of emergency personnel such as police, fire, or paramedics, and hazard vehicles such as tow trucks or DOT highway department vehicles. If it is not possible to shift lanes, the law requires drivers to slow down to at least

20 mph below the speed limit to ensure the safety of emergency personnel.

Captain Kaminski warns that state troopers have begun seriously cracking down on violators through an Enforcement and Awareness Campaign. Route 17 in the Catskills is included in this new area of enforcement. “If people are not aware of the law and don’t move over, they’re likely to be stopped and ticketed.”

Sergeant Schroeder adds that the penalties for violating this important safety law are similar to those imposed for serious moving violations like speeding or passing a school bus with flashing red lights.

## Construction Sites

Captain Kaminski advises westbound Route 17 travelers heading up to the mountains to be aware that a new bridge spanning the Neversink River is being constructed at a location just beyond Exit 109. There are lane closures and detours, and motorists need to pay particular attention to the construction speed zone in that location.

In addition, Captain Kaminski explains that the State Police have assigned a special Traffic Incident Management Unit to construction areas. This unit will strictly enforce speed limits in construction zones. He cautions that no warnings are issued for speed offenses. Rather, these offenses are considered to be hazardous moving violations, and points and fines are involved, leading of course, to problems with insurance rates. Sergeant Schroeder is quick to point out that fines are doubled in a work zone, and furthermore, that stiffer penalties that relate to the future of one’s driving license can result. If three work zone tickets are issued within a period of eighteen months, one’s driver’s license is revoked. It is important to note that motorists are

# What to Do If You're Pulled Over

## **Pull Over**

as soon as it is safe and reasonable to do so. This shows that you have the proper respect for a police vehicle's right of way, and it does not mean that you are admitting guilt.

## **Always pull over to the right**

side of the roadway. On divided highways, signal and safely move over to the far right lane, and then onto the shoulder. Choose a section of the roadway that has a full shoulder, if possible, so that the officer can safely approach the car without the risk of being clipped by a passing vehicle.

## **Make the officer feel safe**

by rolling down your window and placing your hands on the steering wheel. It is advisable not to make any sudden movements and it is a good idea to turn your dome light on at night. Always remain in your vehicle unless the officer instructs otherwise.

## **Allow the officer to address you first.**

Often, drivers blurt out the wrong things to an officer, which may incriminate them. Keep calm. Don't volunteer information about your speed, for example. The officer may be pulling you over for a different reason. Silence is not an admission of guilt and it can never be used against you in court.

## **Know where your paperwork is.**

The officer will first ask you for your license, registration, and insurance. Make sure you know where these documents are so that you don't keep the officer waiting while you rummage through your pockets and wallet. This may not speak well for you or garner sympathy.

Note that driving with a suspended license will result in an immediate arrest and you will face a stiff penalty of mandatory jail time.

## **Never argue with the officer.**

Challenging the officer or asking to see the officer's radar-gun calibration will never result in a positive outcome. If you are issued a ticket and you wish to contest it, set a date in court.

required to observe construction zone speed limits at all times, even though construction activity or construction workers are not present at the time.

## **Leaving the Scene of an Accident**

"The law requires motorists not to leave the scene of an accident," emphasizes Kaminski. He says it is always best to call police to respond to any accident. It is an unclassified misdemeanor to leave the scene of an accident in which an injury is involved, and Sergeant Schroeder warns that such a situation can mean that one may be handcuffed and brought before a judge. It is also important to know that any accident in which damage of over \$1,000 is incurred has to be reported.

The captain reminds motorists that drivable vehicles that are involved in an accident must be moved to a safe location at the side of the road. Do not try to "preserve" the accident so that the police can see it. Doing so raises the risk of further injuries or even death.

Captain Kaminski emphasizes that bystanders should call 911 and leave the scene! It is important that only emergency workers be at the scene of an accident. Bystanders tie up traffic and cause problems by making it difficult for emergency responders to approach. In addition, bystanders risk injury by standing or parking in unsafe areas on the roadway.

## **Pull Over!**

In the event that a driver hears a siren and sees dreaded flashing lights in the rearview mirror, he or she is required to pull over to the right at the first available safe location and to remain inside the vehicle. "Our concern is safety," says Schroeder. "We certainly don't want to see anybody getting hurt or killed."

The troopers urge the community to make use of the New York State Police website at [troopers.ny.gov](http://troopers.ny.gov), and to click on the Traffic Safety section for further information.

# Six Most Important Driving Rules

## 1. Be sure to say Tefilas Haderech!

**2. Rain:** Slow down when driving in rainy weather or on wet roads because your brakes and tires are less effective under these road conditions. Traveling too quickly in a downpour could result in hydroplaning. When hydroplaning, your tires don't touch the road's surface due to a thin layer of what has formed between the tires and the road. If you feel your car hydroplaning, slow down to make contact with the road again by gently easing off the accelerator. Never apply your brakes or turn your steering wheel, because it will throw your vehicle into a skid.

**3. Fog:** Fog is statistically the most dangerous environmental driving hazard, because it severely reduces visibility. If you must drive in foggy conditions, make sure to turn on your low beams and fog lamps. You may be tempted to use your high beams for better visibility; however, it will have the opposite effect, since high beams will reflect back off the fog and impair your vision even more. It is imperative that you don't drive faster than what you can see. Roll down your window to listen to oncoming traffic that you can't see. It is advisable to use the right edge of the road or painted road markings as a guide.

**4. Night:** Traffic accidents are three times more frequent at night than during the day. The two primary factors that lead to nighttime accidents are fatigue and reduced vision. Keep your eyes moving from side to side and from near to far ahead in order to counter eye fatigue. It is also helpful to make frequent stops at rest areas.

Keep your headlight beams on low when you are within 1000 feet of an oncoming vehicle or when you are following a vehicle at a distance of 200 feet or less to avoid blinding other drivers. However, you can turn your eyes away if you are blinded by the glare of an oncoming vehicle's headlights. Do this by watching the markings on the edge of the road.

**5. Drowsy:** Some warning signs of drowsy driving are droopy eyelids, constant yawning, blinking and blurry vision. It is helpful to have a driving companion and to schedule rest stops about every two hours. If you have difficulty keeping your head up or remembering the last few exits you passed, stop immediately and nap for 15-20 minutes.

**6. Texting:** Distracted driving includes anything a driver may do that takes his or her attention away from the road. Eating, talking to passengers, reading and even using a navigation system all increase the likelihood of being involved in a crash. Drivers who text while driving are doing all these actions at the same time. Texting involves using eyes, hands, and mind. It is no coincidence therefore, that texting is considered the most dangerous distraction of all. Texting while driving increases the likelihood of a crash by eight times. It only takes a few seconds, too. Most drivers involved in accidents while they were texting had taken their eyes off the road for less than five seconds.

## תפלת הדרך





Lakewood Chief of Police  
**Robert Lawson**

## Protect Your Home While You Are Away

The Torah promises us: “ולא יחמד איש את ארצו” – *And no man will covet your land* — when you travel to Yerushalayim for the שלש רגלים. Unfortunately, we have no such Divine guarantee for the annual summer pilgrimage to the Catskills or elsewhere, so it is up to us to take the appropriate steps to ensure that our homes are safe while we are away.

Misaskim spoke with Chief Robert Lawson of the Lakewood Police Department, who confirmed that the police do see a rise in burglaries during the summertime. A number of factors are at play, including the increased ease with which burglars can travel around, and the reality that it is easier to gain access to homes because homeowners are less careful about securing windows when the weather is hot. Finally, factor in the fact that many families go away on vacation — thereby leaving their homes at the mercy of local criminals.

Chief Lawson was kind enough to share with us an excellent list of suggestions that will help you to secure your home and possessions while you are vacationing. By following these tips you can significantly decrease the chances that your house will be targeted.

### Secure Your Home

#### Lock Up

Obviously the most basic step is to make sure that all exterior doors are locked, preferably with deadbolts. Doors leading to your home from the garage or basement should be properly locked as well. If you have a sliding glass door, it is essential to place a dowel inside the track so that the door will remain securely shut even if the lock is defeated.

Windows must also be locked, not only on the ground floor but on the upper floors of your home, too. Thieves often find ways of accessing upper-story windows in order to break in.

Secure any structures around your home by locking up the garage and storage sheds. Don't leave any tools around that could be used to break into your house. It is especially important not to leave a ladder handily available, as it can be used to gain access to the upper floors.

#### Alarms

If you have an alarm system, check to be sure the alarm is both functional and turned on. It would

make sense to call the alarm company to check it before you leave. The companies also distribute stickers and signs that you can leave in front of your home, and these are very good deterrents. Some people display these stickers even when they don't have an alarm!

If you have trusted neighbors who are willing to help, give them the alarm code. If the alarm goes off they can notify the police for you, and if it is a false alarm they will be able to deactivate it in your absence.

### Secure Your Valuables

Chief Lawson encourages people not to leave valuables such as jewelry, cash, passports and other important documents, as well as any item of irreplaceable sentimental value, in your home while you are away. You can store these items in a safe deposit box until your return. In case you do suffer a break-in, these items will be secure.

It is also advisable to check that your insurance policy is up-to-date and that you are covered for burglary.



## Don't Advertise Your Absence

Don't discuss your vacation plans in front of strangers. The information might reach the wrong ears and be used to plan a break-in.

There are a number of steps you should take to make your home look lived-in even while you are away:

### Deliveries

Suspend all deliveries of newspapers, mail, and packages to your home. A pile of newspapers in front of your home is a sure sign that you are away. If you will be away for an extended period of time, contact the post office and request that delivery to your home be stopped. You can pick up your mail and packages from the post office when you return.

Alternatively, and better yet, have a trusted friend, family member, or neighbor visit your house every once in a while to pick up your mail. The extra activity around the home will discourage would-be burglars. You may want to give your friend a key so that he or she can enter your house from time to time and make sure everything is in order. Maybe you can arrange for your car to be parked in your driveway some of the time. This action will make it appear as if people are home.

Best of all, see if you can arrange for a house-sitter to live in your home while you are away. Aside from watering the plants and maintaining the home, just the presence of the house-sitter will deter potential thieves.

### Lawn

Make sure your grass is cut regularly. You can ask a neighbor to do it for you. Alternatively, you can pay a gardener to keep your lawn and shrubs neatly trimmed while you are away. In this way, the vegetation does not become overgrown and the house does not begin to look as if it has been abandoned.

### Lighting

Lighting is also critical. Leave a light on in front of your home to deter criminals from approaching.



It's a good idea to set your interior lights on timers too, so that it will look as if you are at home. Have the lights switch on around nightfall and turn off again late in the evening, following the same schedule as if you are home.

### Answering Machine

Set an answering machine to pick up by the third or fourth ring. A telephone that consistently rings 10 or 12 times is a sure giveaway that there is nobody in the home.

## Secure Your Vehicle

Obviously you need to lock any vehicle you leave behind. It is also important, though, not to leave the garage door opener inside your car. In case a thief does break into your car, you don't want to provide him with easy access to your home through the garage.

## Home Safety

For purposes of fire safety, you should turn off any unnecessary appliances during your absence. Unplug all electrical items as well. Not only does this make your home safer, it will also reduce your utility bill!

Chief Lawson informs us that the Lakewood Police offer a vacation check on request. This means you can let the police know when you will be away, and a patrol officer will check your home regularly until you return. He will get out of the patrol car and inspect your property by walking around it. Chief Lawson encourages people to take advantage of this service. In other locales you may want to check with the local police to see if a similar service is offered.

# Message from Catskills Hatzalah

## What to Bear in Mind When Planning Your Vacation

As in past summers, Hatzalah will again be serving vacationers in Ulster and Sullivan Counties. Hatzalah is very proud of its comprehensive network of talented and dedicated volunteers, who have access to the most updated equipment available. However, people summering in the Catskills should bear certain factors in mind when relying on Hatzalah services. Misaskim spoke to Hatzalah coordinators about some important issues.

Many people assume that, should hospitalization become necessary, Hatzalah will automatically accede to their request to be transported to a hospital in New York. This is a mistake. Transporting patients with complex medical conditions to a distant location may be unsafe. Additionally, legal factors do not always permit Hatzalah to bypass local hospitals in favor of the facility of the patient's choice. And finally, transporting a patient all the way back to the city can place an unfair strain on Hatzalah's limited resources.

What does that mean practically? Seniors, the chronically ill, and anyone else at increased risk of needing medical services must consider the risks involved when planning their Catskill vacations. If it is imperative that you be treated exclusively by your own doctors, hospital, or specialized care facility, it may be inadvisable to travel so far from the care you need.

For those who decide to spend time in the Catskills, there are some simple steps you can take that can make a tremendous difference in an emergency. Keep a list of all your medications handy. Also, make sure that a list of your doctors' names and phone numbers, as well as those of any other important contacts, is readily available. This can make it much easier for the EMT to assess your situation and deal with it appropriately.

It is a good idea for people with cardiac conditions to have a copy of an electrocardiogram (EKG) handy. Should Hatzalah need to do an EKG, the old one will serve as a baseline to determine whether the present condition is normal for that person or not.

People who rely on life-support systems should bear in mind that power outages are more likely to occur upstate. It is not realistic to rely on Hatzalah to help you should a blackout occur. If you must have a constant power supply, it is imperative that you prepare in advance. Have a battery backup, or better yet, have your own generator.



# Important Safety Messages from Shomrim

## Before leaving on vacation:

- Carefully check gates and window locks.
- Verify that the alarm and its designated central station system are fully functional.
- Designate a neighbor or friend to take in your mail and/or newspapers that may be left at your doorstep.
- Install time clocks in rooms that face the front or back of your residence, and set them to turn on lights at random times.
- Leave a spare key with a trusted neighbor or family member.
- Store all jewelry and silver in a safe place.

## Baby Sitter:

When leaving your children with a baby sitter:

- Make sure you know how to contact the baby sitter by cell phone.
- Make sure to instruct the baby sitter regarding what to do in case of an emergency.
- When you are away from home, always provide emergency services numbers, as well as your own contact numbers.
- Post the address of your home (colony/bungalow #) and other

important information next to the telephone.

## In the Country:

- Keep the door and windows locked when you leave the bungalow.
- If you hire cleaning help, NEVER leave that person alone.

## Your Car:

- Remove your portable navigation system. Either store it in the trunk of your car or take it with you. Remove the navigation holster from the dashboard or window, since thieves can smash a window on the assumption that the system is under the seat or in a compartment.
- Never leave something that looks valuable on the seat.
- Always keep your car locked and alarmed.

## Children's Safety:

- Always have someone watching the children while they are playing, even in a gated colony. Children can easily wander off, giving rise to a missing child situation.
- Instruct your children NEVER to accept a ride from anyone without your permission.
- They should NEVER walk over to a car to speak to someone whom they don't know.

- They should NEVER accept any food or presents from people who look friendly.
- Review your address and telephone number with young children. In the event they get lost, they will be able to give that information to Shomrim or to the police.
- Label the inside of your children's clothing with tags that list his or her name, address, and telephone number. If you prefer, you can place a sticker on the inner side of a belt, on a shirt next to the company's label, or on a sticker inside the shoe.

## Shabbos Afternoon & Motzei Shabbos Events:

- Make sure you know exactly where your children will be, with whom they are going, with whom they are coming home, and at what time.
- Never allow children to use public transportation without your permission.
- Never allow children to ride in a car service unaccompanied by a responsible person..

***The Boro Park Shomrim wish you and your family a healthy and safe summer.***



# Summer Safety in the Mountains



By Sullivan County Sheriff Mike Schiff

Mike Schiff has been the elected Sheriff of Sullivan County since 2006. He lives in Liberty, NY with his wife and four children.

While the events of the Boston Marathon are still fresh in everyone's mind, there have been other horrific attacks against people in the U.S. that have taken place outside urban areas. One case was the West Nickel Mines School Massacre which occurred in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania in October of 2006. Gunman Charles Roberts entered a rural one-room Amish school house and took hostages. By time the incident ended, Roberts had shot ten children, killing five, before turning the gun on himself.

The lessons learned from that incident show that violent acts are not confined to the big cities. We live in a different world today. Even when visiting the beautiful and peaceful Catskill Mountains, we must still be vigilant and exercise common-sense safety precautions. Many visitors stay in community-type settings or camps where it is easy to get to know your neighbors and the vehicles they drive. If you see something that is "out of place," alert your fellow residents. If you see a suspicious person or vehicle, call the police. The Homeland Security message always applies, "If you see something, say something." Recently, people who have followed this principle have helped us solve crimes, including burglaries and theft of copper pipes. Such vigilance can help prevent more serious incidents as well.

We wish to reiterate the importance of a safety issue that we remind everyone about each year. Please exercise caution when walking on country roads. Since there are virtually no sidewalks or street lights, we ask that you always walk facing oncoming traffic and wear reflective material on your clothes at night.

Another item of importance centers on taking proper precautions when it comes to wildlife. Please don't feed wild animals. They have to be able to survive on their own the rest of the year. When they depend on handouts from humans, they tend to become aggressive and can be a nuisance. Bears are especially troublesome. Do not leave garbage outside. Use your community's trash compactor if you have one.

It is important to thoroughly review the references and the work history of all temporary, summer employees and staff members in order to obtain accurate information about them. Failure to do so can result in employees and staff members who steal, do not show up for work, or do not do their jobs properly. Because of Homeland Security issues, camp management should also make sure to obtain information regarding their employees. Necessary background information should include knowledge of winter addresses and phone numbers. Such knowledge will go a long way toward preventing unsavory characters from being hired and possibly harming other staff members or the children.

This year we are also highlighting "Camp Safety Plans." Camp organizers and managers are being asked to meet with staff prior to the start of the season to review their camp's safety plan. The plan should include:

- Response procedures in the event of fire, flood, power outages, storms, crimes, aggressive wildlife, or missing or injured persons.
- Response procedures (that includes lockdown protocols) in the event that an active shooter or other trespasser intent on doing harm is found on the premises.
- A decision regarding the location of a rally point or meeting place in case of evacuation.
- Ensure that an emergency transportation plan has been developed, in case the camp's premises must be evacuated.
- Compile a list of the authorities who should automatically be notified if an emergency situation develops.

The camp's safety plan should be located in a place where it is readily accessible by staff members any time of the day or night so that it can be used in an emergency.

On behalf of all law enforcement, we wish you the happiest and safest summer season.



## CRMC

### Welcomes the Community

Along with the joys and pleasures that highlight the summer are the inevitable medical emergencies that accompany it. Some are directly related to summer activities, such as Lyme disease, heat exhaustion, and severe sunburns, or are the result of outdoor athletic activities. And of course, we should not forget that standard pediatric diseases can strike at any time of the year.

Catskill Regional Medical Center stands ready to serve the needs of our community with dedicated medical professionals who have top-notch medical, diagnostic, and treatment tools at their disposal. As stated in literature provided to Misaskim by the Medical Center, "CRMC is committed to delivering patient-centered quality health care in a healing environment, and the hospital's compassionate staff provides attentively to the needs of patients and their families."

To better serve our community's unique needs, the Medical Center has forged a mutually respectful relationship with Hatzalah's Catskills division. Each year, CRMC and Hatzalah conduct meetings in an effort to constantly improve care by coordinating efforts and working closely together on all fronts.

For the community's convenience, the hospital has set aside a fully stocked Chesed Room, sponsored by Chesed of New Square, which provides kosher meals and snacks, Jewish reading materials, and comfortable chairs for rest and relaxation. The Chesed Room is located on the hospital's fifth floor, and is open 24/7 for those in need.

For family members of patients hospitalized over Shabbos, Chesed of New Square has kindly provided a trailer equipped with comfortable sleeping accommodations that is located at the rear of the hospital.



Each summer, the Medical Center hires a member of our community to serve as a liaison between the hospital and its Jewish patients. His mission is to set up effective lines of communication between the community and the hospital to ensure effective and efficient patient care. To reach the liaison, please contact Jodi Goodman, CRMC community service director.

For more information on CRMC services and travel directions, please visit [www.crmcny.org](http://www.crmcny.org) or call 845-794-3300.

# An Important Message about Summer Vacation Safety



Sullivan County Public Safety Commissioner  
**Richard Martinkovic**

## Misaskim Interviews

### Sullivan County Public Safety Commissioner Richard Martinkovic About Summer Safety

With an eye to the droves of summer visitors who migrate north into the mountains each summer, we spoke with the Public Safety Commissioner of Sullivan County, Mr. Richard Martinkovic. We asked him what important safety messages he would like to share with our readers in advance of the vacation season.

Dick Martinkovic spent over 30 years in the Fire Services before assuming his present post as County Public Safety Commissioner. Discussing his role of protecting the public, Martinkovic tells us, "I'm glad to do it; my heart and soul is there." The tone of his voice tells us he means every word he says.

Commissioner Martinkovic participated in a mid-March conference that brought together representatives of upstate police agencies and Hatzalah and Misaskim to plan and prepare for the upcoming summer vacation season. The Commissioner raised several points at that meeting which he has asked us to reiterate to our readership.

## Post Your Address and Know It!

It is very important that every camp or bungalow colony post its **name** and **address** clearly, and that it is visible from the road. In case of an emergency, it is also important for summer visitors to be familiar with the name and address of the colony or camp at which they are staying, as well as the **number of the building** they are occupying.

Commissioner Martinkovic tells us that construction often goes on during the winter off-season. Sometimes, signs are removed and not replaced. In another scenario, a bungalow colony may change ownership and remove a sign that no longer reflects the colony's new name. To help emergency services locate the colony and provide help in a timely fashion, the name and address of the camp or bungalow colony should be clearly marked on the sign. If you arrive at a particular location and find that there is no sign, make sure to ask the property owner to post a sign.

"When that trooper comes down the road, he needs not only to see the address of the property, he also needs to see the name of the camp or colony. That's one of the first things I encourage

people to do when they come to the summer area."

An important proviso: Make sure that sign is posted in **ENGLISH!** "We have colonies changing names and then posting the new names using Hebrew letters. When I see that I think, 'Hey, what are you doing?' It's okay to use Hebrew letters, of course; I understand that the people staying there need to read the signs in the language they understand best; but local law enforcement personnel need signs in English as well."

When one calls 911 from a cell phone, law authorities can track the source of the call. So even if you are not sure about your location, you shouldn't hesitate to call if you see something suspicious or become aware of a life-threatening situation. Once again, though, Commissioner Martinkovic asks that visitors also make an effort to assist emergency services by knowing the name, address, and building number of their location.

"When people come to the country, they're interested in moving in, taking care of the kids – all the things that they do when they're on vacation. However, they should not take it for granted that we will know where they are."

## If You Dial 911 By Mistake, Please Don't Hang Up!

It's okay to make mistakes sometimes. You might unintentionally dial 911 and then get worried and hang up. Perhaps you meant to dial area code 914 to reach Westchester, but you pressed the 1

manner. Quite frankly, without Hatzalah, conditions would be extremely difficult for our local folk due to the heavy influx of summer visitors. Of course, no matter what happens, we do our best always."

Commissioner Martinkovic asks us to extend his warmest wishes for a very happy and safe summer for everyone. "As public safety commissioner, I'm

Perhaps you meant to dial area code 914 or 917, but you pressed the 1 twice by mistake.

**Don't just hang up!**  
**Wait to speak to the dispatcher and inform him or her of the mistake.**

twice by mistake. Please, it is very important: Don't just hang up! Wait to speak to the dispatcher and inform him or her of the mistake and that everyone is fine.

Commissioner Martinkovic explains what happens when you hang up: "That call is still coming to us, and we're going to call back and ask, 'Is everything okay?' In some cases the person who made the call doesn't want to answer the phone because it was a mistake. But that is even worse, because now, if we receive no answer, we have to send a police officer to make sure everything is okay."

This wastes precious time and resources that may be needed for a true emergency. "Speak to the 911 dispatcher and say, 'I'm sorry, it was my mistake,' and apologize, and then we can move on."

## Can't Remember Hatzalah's Number?

You're used to the number for Hatzalah at home, but when you're visiting upstate, make sure you have the Hatzalah number prominently displayed near your phone.

Commissioner Martinkovic is very proud of the close cooperation that exists between local emergency services and Hatzalah. "We're developing closer and closer working relationships all the time. Now that Hatzalah has a new building in the Catskills with a garage and a communications room, it is much better equipped to receive calls and to get a good dispatch.

"We support Hatzalah 1000%. It's a great organization, and it functions in a very professional

very concerned about everyone's safety. I want people to feel a sense of security; to know that they can call us if they have an emergency situation; and that we will get help to them as soon as we can. It is our pleasure to be there for our summer visitors. Do not hesitate to let me know if there is anything I can do for you."

*Thank you,  
Commissioner Martinkovic!*



## **Brooklyn:** Buying a Floater? Don't Buy a Used Car Without Checking New List of Storm-Damaged Vehicles



You saw them all over Sheepshead Bay and other neighborhoods in the days following Sandy – the four-wheeled storm victims that littered the streets at odd angles after flood waters carried them along and then dropped them anywhere, leaving them with no value except for insurance claims.

For a few unscrupulous used car dealers, the estimated 400,000 cars flooded by Sandy quickly became the stuff of opportunity, and unsuspecting customers who bought the vehicles got taken for a ride.

To protect customers from unethical dealers hawking Sandy's collateral damage, Assemblyman Steven Cymbrowitz (D-Brooklyn), a member of the Insurance Committee, is urging potential used-car buyers to heed a consumer alert warning issued by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

A link on the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) website allows consumers to immediately determine whether a used vehicle is a "flood car," damaged due to Sandy or other circumstances.

"If you're in the market for a used car, a quick check of this website will save you a lot of unnecessary expense and aggravation," Assemblyman Cymbrowitz said.

The National Insurance Crime Bureau's VINCheck permits anyone to enter the vehicle identification number (VIN) to determine the status of the vehicle. If the vehicle had been declared as salvage by a VINCheck-participating NICB member insurance company, the NICB site reports both the date of loss and the cause of the damage.

"It is unfortunate that there are people out there trying to capitalize on the devastation caused by Sandy, but it is fortunate that we have a mechanism to protect ourselves against these unscrupulous actions," Assemblyman Cymbrowitz said.

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# M. FRIED

## STORE FIXTURES



*Fully stocked showroom*



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# Pedestrian Safety on Country Roads

Country roads present a new set of challenges for urban pedestrians, who are accustomed to wide, brightly-lit, and clearly-delineated city streets. Misaskim spoke to Chief Simmie Williams of the Fallsburg Police Department about important safety tips when walking on country roads.



## About Chief Williams

Simmie Williams was born and raised in Fallsburg. He spent 18 years in the Fallsburg Police Department before being appointed Police Chief in 2008. Williams is universally respected and beloved for his ready smile, his unassuming attitude, and the friendliness with which he puts everyone at ease.

There is no doubt that policing a community that triples every summer creates its own unique challenges, but Chief Williams has met them. He urges both the local year-round community and the summer visitors to take the time to get to know and understand each other. He has been proactive in reaching out to Orthodox Jewish leaders regarding matters affecting vacationers in his jurisdiction.

## Wear Reflective Gear and Exercise Caution with Your Baby's Stroller!

### Make Sure You Are Clearly Visible at Night

Unlike the roads you may be used to back home, country roads are often not lit by street lights. That means it may be hard for drivers to see you when you are out walking after dark. This is especially important for men, who may be clothed in black from head to toe.

And because many country roads do not feature a yellow divider and neat white lines to cordon off the shoulder, you may be competing with drivers for the same stretch of road.

It is of utmost importance to **wear reflective gear**, such as a belt or vest, which should be visible both from the **front and from behind**. That way drivers can see you, whether you are walking against the traffic (the correct way) or with it. If reflective gear is not available, **carry a flashlight** or anything that will make you visible – even a candle, Chief Williams suggests with a laugh!

“We understand that in the summer you’ve got this nice beautiful weather and the ladies and men like to do a lot of walking with the kids. You need to wear something reflective on your back, as well as something to warn those approaching from the front. That’s how we can have a safe and healthy summer.”

### Make Sure to Pull Your Stroller Off the Road When a Car Passes

Chief Williams points out another potentially disastrous habit that most of us probably don’t even realize. While many pedestrians instinctively move away from the roadway when a car approaches, some are less careful about the baby stroller that they are pushing. It takes extra effort to drag the stroller off the road and then pull it back on to the roadway each time a car passes by, but the risks of failing to do so are just not worth it.

“Many of our cops have noticed, and I’ve seen this too, that a number of women who are pushing carriages move to the right when they see a car approaching, but they position the stroller or carriage close to the road. If somebody doesn’t see you on the road, then he or she is definitely not going to notice that there’s a stroller there as well.

“ My recommendation is to try and **keep that carriage as close to the shoulder as possible**, even if you have to stop and push the carriage onto the dirt or off to the side of the road. **Continue your walk only once the car has passed by**. Allowing the carriage to remain on the roadway is dangerous.”

With a bit of extra care and foresight, you can ensure that your summer vacation will remain a pleasant and enjoyable experience.

# COMPREHENSIVE LISTING OF ALTERNATE ROUTES TO AND FROM THE CATSKILLS

## From the Catskills

### If you are near Route 52:

Take Route 52 South until Route 84 East, 84 East until Exit 10 - 9W South. Take 9W South into the Palisades Parkway South (might have some traffic in town of Newburgh).

### If you are near Route 42:

Take Route 42 South for 20 miles to 97 South until end. Take 6 East to 23 South for 45 miles until 80 East or until 46 East to Route 3 East to the Lincoln Tunnel (this road is a very winding road).

### From the 17 East:

Take Exit 121 to Route 84. You can either • continue on 84 East until Exit 10 - 9W South, 9W South into the Palisades Parkway South (might have some traffic in town of Newburgh) or • take 84 West to Exit 1, to 6 West to 23 South until 80 East or until 46 East to Route 3 East to the Lincoln Tunnel (this road is a very winding road) or • take 17 East to Exit 125 to 17M East until the end to the Old 17 South until NJ 17 South.

## To the Catskills

### New Jersey 17:

To avoid the 3 West and NJ 17 merge delay, after coming out of the Lincoln Tunnel, stay on 495 to Route 3 West. Take 3 West to 120 North Moonachie. Take 120 North to 17 North. This will take you behind Giants Stadium.

To avoid the delays caused by the 2 lane merge on the NJ 17 North by National Wholesale Liquidators, take 80 West (local lanes) to exit 62 Garden State Parkway North. Take GSP to Exit

163 which is NJ 17 North. Right before the exit, there is an overpass where one can see the traffic on the NJ 17. If it is backed up, stay on the Garden State Parkway until the Thruway North. If it is not backed up, exit and take the NJ 17 North until the Thruway.

### From the Garden State Parkway:

If the New York Thruway North is backed up take the NY Thruway South to Exit 13 to the Palisades Parkway North to Route 6 to the NY 17.

### From the Lincoln or Holland Tunnel:

Take the NJ Turnpike to 80 West (local lanes) to Exit 62 Garden State Parkway North. Right before Exit 163, there is an overpass where one can see the traffic on the NJ 17. If it is backed up, stay on the Garden State Parkway until the Thruway North. If it is not backed up, exit and take the NJ 17 North until the Thruway.

## Staten Island to New Jersey

### Via the Goethals Bridge:

Take Bay Street exit all the way to the right of the toll plaza. Stay on Bay Street which becomes Richmond Terrace (same direction as to the Staten Island Ferry) • continue on Richmond Terrace to South Avenue, make a left on South Avenue until Goethals North Road, make a right on Goethals North Road onto the bridge or • continue on Richmond Terrace until the end, make a left on Western Avenue under Goethals Bridge, come around and onto the bridge.

### Via the Bayonne Bridge:

Take Bay Street exit all the way to the right of the toll plaza. Stay on Bay Street which becomes

Richmond Terrace (same direction as to the Staten Island Ferry). Continue on Richmond Terrace under Bayonne Bridge to Morning Star Road. Make a left. Go 4 blocks to Walker Street. Make a left onto Walker to Bayonne Bridge. Take Bayonne Bridge to the 169 North into the NJ Turnpike.

### Missed the Bay Street Exit?

Exit at Clove Rd. Make a right onto Clove Rd. Continue to Forest Avenue. Make a left onto Forest Avenue. • Follow "440" signs to Bayonne Bridge or • continue on Forest Avenue to Staten Island Expressway, make a right at Staten Island Expressway, continue to Goethals Bridge.

## New Jersey to Staten Island

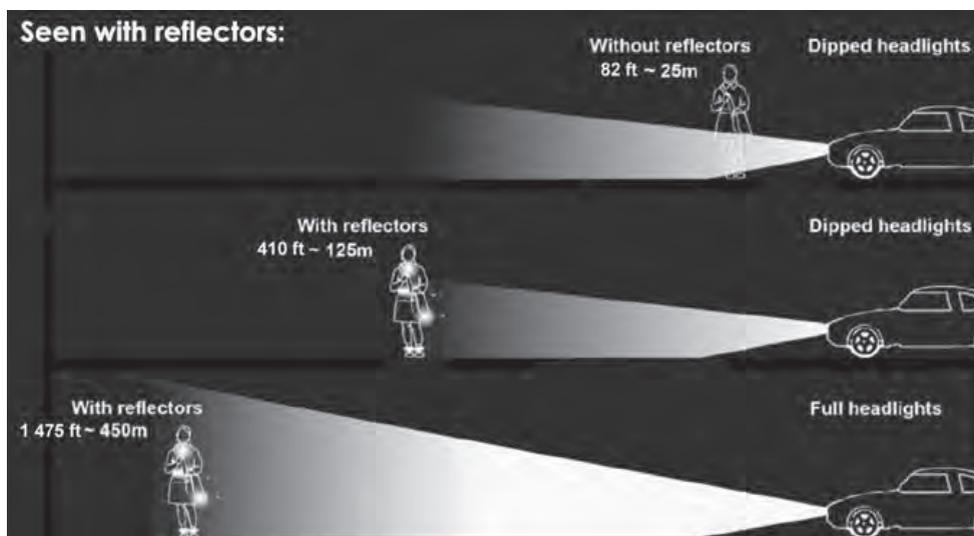
### From the Outerbridge Crossing:

1) Take Richmond Parkway until the end, to Richmond Avenue. Make a right onto Richmond Avenue until the end to Hylan Blvd. Make a left on Hylan Blvd. Continue until the Verrazano Bridge.

2) Immediately after Outerbridge Crossing, exit onto Page Avenue (this exit is 100 ft after toll plaza). Take Page Avenue to Hylan Blvd. Make a left on Hylan Blvd. Continue until the Verrazano Bridge.

### From the Goethals Bridge:

Exit at Forest Avenue. Make a left on Forest Avenue. Continue to Clove Rd. Make a right on Clove Rd. Continue over the Staten Island Expressway. Make a left and continue to the Verrazano Bridge.



# Kids, Cars and Heat:

## A Deadly Combination

The numbers speak volumes. So far this year, seven young children across the country have lost their lives due to hyperthermia (heatstroke) after having been left unattended in cars. Each year an average of 32 children die, and hundreds more suffer brain damage, blindness, loss of hearing, and other afflictions as a result of vehicular heatstroke. In fact, heatstroke is the leading cause of non-crash vehicle-related deaths of children in the United States.

But the numbers don't tell the whole story. They don't speak of the destroyed lives and relationships, the heartbreak, the endless regrets and recriminations. Each incident is unspeakably tragic, especially since each and every one is entirely preventable.



### Heatstroke Danger for Young Children

On an average summer day, when outdoor temperatures can easily top 80 degrees Fahrenheit, it takes only ten minutes for the temperature in a vehicle to reach 130 degrees, or more. Even relatively cool temperatures in the 60's can raise the temperature inside a vehicle to above 110 degrees, creating lethal conditions that can lead to heat stroke. Heat stroke occurs when body temperatures exceed 104 degrees Fahrenheit, at which point the body's internal temperature-regulation system becomes overwhelmed. At 107 degrees, body cells become damaged and internal organs shut down. However, because children's temperature-regulating systems are not fully developed, their body temperatures rise three to five times faster than is the case with adults. If children are trapped in a car for even 15 minutes, their lives are threatened and their condition deteriorates rapidly.

Experts point out that leaving a window open will not do much to lower the temperature inside a vehicle.

### Leaving Baby 'Just for a Minute'

It may seem tempting to leave a peacefully sleeping infant in the car for just a minute while mom or dad runs a quick errand, or dashes into a preschool to pick up an older child. However, this lapse in judgment often proves deadly for young children. From 1998 through 2012, about 100 children died after having been left intentionally in a vehicle. In each case, the caregiver or parent intended to leave the child for only a very short time, but even that short period of time was too long!

In an attempt to prevent these tragedies, many states, including New York, have passed laws making it illegal to leave a child alone in a car for any length of time. Penalties range from fines to jail time, depending on the length of time the child was left

unattended and (if applicable) the severity of injury the child suffered.

### Leaving Children Unintentionally

Studies show that almost all parents say that they would never accidentally leave a child in the car. But the facts show otherwise. According to KidsandCars.org, parents who have lost a child to heatstroke in a vehicle are the kinds of parents who take every safety precaution: They are loving, caring parents; they represent a cross-section of the general population, on all socio/economic, racial/ethnic, age, gender, and professional levels.

Raizy Abramov,\* mother of a large family in Brooklyn, recounts her experience when she accidentally left her toddler asleep in the family van. A stickler for safety, she relates how even before this incident, her family had a system whereby each older child was responsible for the safety and whereabouts of a younger sibling. This



one time, however, her careful safety rules didn't work.

"It happened on the way to sheva brachos for one of my older children," Raizy recalls. "All my unmarried children, from my teens down to the baby, were in the family van — a big 12-passenger 'clunker.' As we exited the car, I asked my teenagers if everyone was accounted for, to which they replied in the affirmative. At the catering hall, I assumed the baby was with my husband on the other side of the mechitza. I asked a child to check on him and he told me that the baby was playing downstairs with the other small children. The next thing I knew, the police were there with my child. Someone outside had heard a child crying, had found him in the van, and had called the police. They went from door to door, looking for the baby's mother. Once they found me, they placed me under arrest right then and there.

"Baruch Hashem, the baby was okay. It was a cool evening and the windows in the van were open, but when I think of what might have been..." Although Raizy was lucky, and b'chasdei Hashem was released after a very short while without being charged, she relates that the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) intruded into their lives for quite some time afterward. "It was a terrible pressure for my kids. The ACS called the yeshivos and schools that our children attend, and it was very embarrassing for all of us. And this was something that could have been avoided had I been more aware of everything going on around me."

Reflecting on her experience, Raizy says she is grateful. "It was bashert for me that this should happen, but it was a lesson for me as well. I thank

Hashem that it wasn't a lesson that's not reversible."

### Children Entering Unlocked Cars

A common danger that often catches parents unawares is when children climb into unlocked cars to play and then become trapped inside.

"I thought my three-year-old had gone to the grocery store with my older daughter, but then, she returned without him," says Crown Heights mom, Lana Silverman.\* We panicked and started a search for him. We found him asleep in our minivan, which was parked in front of our home. He was sweaty and tear-streaked, and told us he had been crying because he didn't know how to operate the doors. We hadn't even realized that the car was unlocked; apparently my husband had forgotten to click the remote after coming home that day.

"Baruch Hashem, it was a cool day, and the car was parked in the shade of a large tree, but he was definitely sweating when we found him. I still shudder when I think that. I, worry-wart mom that I am, wasn't even aware of the danger of unlocked cars until this incident occurred. Now I hug my boy a little tighter, and triple-check that the car doors are locked whenever we leave it."

Many parents are not as fortunate as Mrs. Silverman. Experts say that over 160 heatstroke deaths of children since 1998 are attributable to the fact that children went into cars alone to play. This is truly heartbreaking, since just one press on the button of the remote would have been all that would have been needed to prevent these deaths.

### Prevention Tips

The NHTSA has kicked off a public awareness campaign centered around its "Where's Baby? Look Before You Lock!" parent-education initiative. "Each year, especially during the summer months, we hear reports of the tragic loss of young children as a result of heatstroke in hot vehicles," says U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. "We hope everyone who cares about the safety of our children — parents, grandparents, caregivers, and others — will follow the simple, and important, safeguards that can save lives and avoid unnecessary heartache."

- Never leave a child unattended in a vehicle — even if the windows are partially open or the air conditioning is on.
- Make a habit of looking in the vehicle — front and back — before locking the door and walking away.
- Ask the childcare provider to call if the child does not show up for care as expected.
- Do things that serve as a reminder that a child is in the vehicle, such as placing a purse or briefcase in the back seat to ensure that no child is accidentally left in the vehicle, or writing a note, or using a stuffed animal placed within the driver's view to indicate that a child is in the car seat.
- Teach children that a vehicle is not a play area and be sure to store keys out of a child's reach.
- Always double check that the doors to the vehicle are locked before walking away.

As part of its campaign, the NHTSA also urges bystanders to take immediate action when observing a child alone in a vehicle. Their instructions include calling 911 and removing the child from the hot car as quickly as possible.

\* Name has been changed.

# Pool Safety Precautions

On June 28th, 2012, tragedy struck a young family from Union, New Jersey. Two brothers, aged 3 and 5, wandered out of their home while their mother was dozing. Upon awakening and discovering that her children were missing, the panicked mom called the police and an immediate search was launched. Tragically, both children were found at the bottom of their neighbor's backyard pool. Efforts to revive the little boys were fruitless and the children were pronounced dead at the hospital.

Heartbreaking as it is, this tragic accident was unfortunately far from an isolated occurrence. In fact, it was the fourth child-drowning incident in June, 2012 in the state of New Jersey alone. According to the Centers for Disease Control, with the exception of deaths resulting from birth defects, drowning is the leading cause of death among children aged 1 to 4. Among children aged 1 to 14, drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional, injury-related death, eclipsed only by motor-vehicle related deaths.

## Danger for All Children

Although most of these drowning deaths occur in home swimming pools that are inadequately supervised, our urban communities are sadly not immune to such tragedies. Drowning accidents involving young children happen in bathtubs, in kiddie wading pools, and even in buckets of water. The most obvious danger during the summer months, however, results from the plethora of swimming pools that exist in camps, summer homes, and bungalow colonies.

"The loss devastated us, the pain is immeasurable," reflected Shimshy Weingarten in an interview with Misaskim during which he spoke about the tragedy that claimed the life of his oldest child, two-year-old Moshe Elimelech. "It was August 24th, 1983," he related, "Moshe Elimelech wandered away from our bungalow. He had a tendency to wander and explore, as two-year-olds do, and my wife spent most of that summer looking for him. That day, when she couldn't find him in the immediate vicinity, my wife looked in the direction of the pool and confirmed that the door was chained shut. Upon closer inspection however, she noticed that there was enough space for a small child to slip through the opening. The door was immediately unlocked and our little boy was found. By that time, though, it was too late."

Mr. Weingarten cautions parents to be vigilant about the dangers that pose a threat to children, especially during the summer months. Sometimes parents get sidetracked and are unaware of the potential dangers that can cause a serious problem. Obviously, everything is *bashert* and accidents can happen even if one has a thousand eyes. But still one is required to exercise *hishtadlus*."

Caution is advised even when the all necessary safeguards seem to be in place. The tragedy that struck the family of eighteen-month old Simi Green\* occurred at a pool that had a certified lifeguard on duty. In addition, the baby's mother was also at the pool, as was Simi's babysitter. "Everybody was there, but it seems that everybody thought that someone else was watching the baby," Simi's father told Misaskim. "Nobody saw the baby climb out of the carriage and head for the pool. By the time somebody noticed that the carriage was empty, it was too late to save Simi's life."

Mr. Green pleads with parents to take the necessary precautions to prevent further tragedies, *chas v'shalom*. "Everybody should feel that it is his or her *achrayus* to watch a child at the pool," he stresses. "Everybody should be aware at all times of who is in charge of the children."

\* Name has been changed.



## Simple Safety Strategies

The CDC issues recommendations to increase child water safety. A major component in keeping young children safe when they are in or around water, (including bathtubs) is to provide “touch supervision.” This means that one must be in close enough proximity to the child to be able to reach him or her at all times. The CDC warns that “because drowning occurs quickly and quietly, adults should not be involved in any other distracting activity (such as reading, playing cards, talking on the phone, or mowing the lawn) while supervising children, even if lifeguards are present.”

The CDC also strongly recommends instituting buddy systems at pools, and advises adults to learn how to administer CPR. This crucially important skill can often save a child’s life in the critical minutes that elapse until paramedics arrive. Some of the CDC’s “don’ts” include:

- 1.** Don’t use air-filled or foam toys, such as “water wings,” “noodles,” or inner-tubes, instead of life jackets. These toys are not life jackets, and are not designed to keep swimmers safe.
- 2.** In addition — and this is especially important for camps and day camps — do not allow swimmers to try to hold their breath underwater for long periods of time. This can cause them to suffer “shallow water blackout” and drown.

## Enjoy the Water!

One of summer’s many joys is the splash of fun that pools provide. The parent-child bonding opportunities that are created by swimming and playing in pools and at beaches should be utilized and enjoyed. All it takes is a bit of advance planning and some extra vigilance to keep young swimmers safe from danger. Mr. Weingarten has some simple advice for parents. “Be aware of dangers,” he stresses. “Don’t take an easy, nonchalant approach to child safety.”





# 10 Tips to

**Drowning is a quick and silent killer.**

Most children don't have the ability to know what to do when drowning and don't yell for help. As a result, they slip away in silence.

**1.** Do not consider a child "drowning-proof" even if he or she is wearing proper floatables. Always make sure to have an adult who knows CPR closely supervise your children.

**2.** Install an emergency phone with a dedicated line at the pool. It can save lives! Never rely on a cell phone!

**3.** Remove all toys from the pool after use so that children aren't tempted to reach for them when no one is around.

**4.** Be sure to keep rescue equipment such as a shepherd's hook or life preserver next to the pool.

**5.** Designate one person to be in charge of locking the pool area immediately after use and each time pool maintenance workers leave.

# Prevent Pool Tragedies

**6.** Designate one person to be in charge of locking the pool on Shabbos if it is used as a Mikvah.

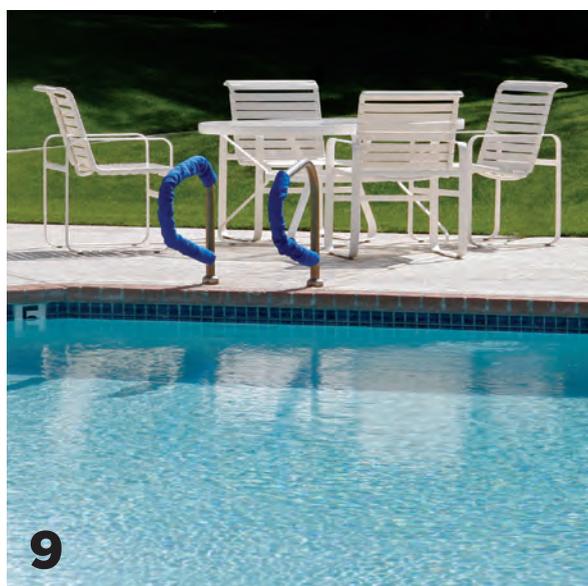
**7.** Check that the fence around the pool is at least five feet high and that there are no gaps in the fencing or under the fence.

**8.** Make sure that the gate latches are self-locking.

**9.** Is the area near the pool clear of chairs and tables?

**10.** Are the steps to above-ground pools removed after use?

**If a child is missing, always look in the pool first. Seconds count in preventing death or disability.**





# Trail Safety:

## Staying Safe on Summer Hikes

Nothing speaks of summer quite like a roaring waterfall against a backdrop of trees, rocks, and flora. Add the crunch of leaves underfoot, the scurrying of little insects concealed beneath rocks, the stillness and solitude of being alone with nature ...ah, the glories of summer hiking!

Captain Dan Walsh, the Forest Ranger Captain for the region serving the Catskill Park southward, is the head of the Enforcement Division of the Forest Ranger Program of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The NYSDEC operates on about 15% of all land in the state, including the five boroughs, Long Island, the Adirondacks, and the Catskills. Captain Walsh's department is in charge of law enforcement and public safety on all DEC land. In addition, it is tasked with fighting forest fires and conducting search-and-rescue missions throughout the state. Recently, Misaskim spoke with Captain Walsh. We are pleased to offer our readers his professional recommendations for ensuring safety while hiking.

Captain Walsh encourages the public to take advantage of the wonderful recreation areas that are available to them. Residents of New York State can take pride in the beautiful trails and waterfalls that abound within our state. But at the same time, everyone should remain mindful of the potential hazards that can be avoided — simply by following basic common-sense rules.

### Before Starting Out

Number one on Captain Walsh's list of precautions is the necessity to inform others of your hiking plans before starting out. "Make sure that people know where you're going and when you intend to be back," the officer warns. In case of mishap, the appropriate authorities can then be provided with necessary information that can make all the difference.

### Some Other Pointers:

1. Know your limitations. Don't assume that, just because you are in good physical condition, you can
2. Knowing one's limitations is never more important than when one is hiking with children. Children

undertake an arduous hike in the Catskills. Walking or jogging in the city does not an experienced hiker make! Captain Walsh recommends that hikers start with short trips first to test their endurance. He stresses the need to always learn about the terrain that will be traversed before starting out on a hike, and also to be honest with oneself about one's hiking capabilities.

tire easily and they are prone to tripping and falling. In addition, one must be aware of the child who is a daredevil-type. For them, steep climbs and sharp cliffs pose real risks.

Keep in mind that young children riding in backpacks, or infants in child carriers, place additional physical stress on adult hikers. In such situations, balance and coordination may be impaired, so plan your trip accordingly.

3. It is imperative to wear proper footwear. Street shoes will not

work well on a trail in the Catskill Mountains. Improper footwear is the cause of many lower-leg injuries that occur on hikes, so be sure to wear hiking boots or hiking shoes. Furthermore, “Don’t forget that you need to break in a new pair of boots first, otherwise you’ll get blisters,” warns Captain Walsh.

4. Take the time to pack a backpack with hiking necessities. The items in your backpack can save you from much misery in the event that your hike does not proceed as planned. According to Captain Walsh, the rule of thumb when hiking is to prepare to spend the night in the woods. Therefore, sufficient food, a plentiful supply of water, a flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries, a map and a compass, a whistle (important!), a change of clothing, waterproof matches, and a tarp in case of inclement weather, are absolutely essential.
5. Take your cellphone. The widespread use of cellphones has changed the face of search and rescue missions on hiking trails dramatically. Often, individuals lost in the woods can call for help. By using the coordinates provided by the cellphone company, authorities can then direct hikers out of the woods by tracking their movements. If a hiker is reported missing and is “unresponsive,” meaning that he cannot answer his phone, rescuers can track the location where the phone was last used or activated, and use those coordinates as a starting point for a search-and-rescue mission.

At the same time, Captain Walsh warns hikers not to rely on their cellphones. “Cellphones provide a false sense of security,” he stresses. Especially in the Catskills, cellphones often do not work deep in a valley or on the back side of a mountain or hill. In addition, hikers often lose their

phones on strenuous hikes. Another factor that people are unaware of is that phones in roaming mode use up battery life more quickly as they search for a signal. The captain recommends preparing for a hike by making the assumption that a cellphone will not work in the woods.

## Safety While Hiking

Safety precautions on hikes are simple enough, yet they can spell the difference between a successful hike and disaster. The all-important rule of making sure one has an adequate water supply is first and foremost. Says Captain Walsh, “Don’t think it’s enough to take a long drink before leaving the car — even if you’re hiking in an area with lots of streams and ponds. I wouldn’t trust water from the Catskills’ streams, so I advise people to bring a lot of water with them.”

In addition, Walsh stresses the importance of staying on marked trails. Do not wander away to explore or to find “shortcuts.” He urges groups to stay together, and to make sure that no one is lagging behind. In a scenario during which a member of the group is injured, one person must always stay with the injured individual while another person goes to seek assistance.

Walsh recommends keeping all food sealed in a bear-proof container or at a distance from where you make camp in order to avoid receiving any unwanted animal visits. Finally, Captain Walsh issues a gentle reminder. “There isn’t any garbage pickup in the Catskills, so make sure you don’t leave any trash behind. Make sure that you carry out of the Catskills whatever you carry in. It’ll help the Catskills look a lot nicer and keep the bears, raccoons, opossums, and skunks away!”

## Lost!

If you do find yourself lost in the woods, Captain Walsh reminds the community to stay calm and not panic.

If you are lost during daylight hours, his instructions are to stop and attempt to get your bearings with your map and compass. Do not get off a marked trail under any circumstances. If you cannot get your bearings, or if night has fallen, the rule is simple: Don’t move. If you have a working cellphone, call 911. If not, the captain assures us, “We will find you.”

Captain Walsh says it is important for children and teens under the age of 18 who may have become separated from their group and who have lost their way to know that even during daylight hours they should not attempt to find their way out. Rather, they should not budge from their location—just simply stop and wait to be found.

Captain Walsh stresses that his department is available at any time of day or night to assist lost or injured hikers. He explains that if a hiker sustains a sprained ankle or a similar injury, the department uses litters onto which the patient is strapped and carried out of the woods. However, if a hiker suffers a life-threatening injury such as a heart attack, stroke, or back injury, helicopters are called in. These rescue helicopters hover over the forest, lower a litter through the trees, hoist the patient up, and transport him or her to a hospital. According to the captain, helicopter rescues occur about once a year in the Catskills.

Captain Walsh concludes by expressing great admiration for the efforts our community makes to assist in the event of the need to mount a search for a missing individual. He remarked that such support is very helpful, but he cautions that in their zeal to assist, the searchers may find themselves lost too! Therefore, if a police officer or other professional requests that volunteers cease searching, it is absolutely imperative, for the sake of public safety, for members of the community to cooperate fully.

# Respect Wildlife!

Vacationing in the mountains brings many of us into closer contact with wildlife than we normally would ever dream of. Living close to animals can be thrilling, but it is a privilege that comes with appropriate responsibilities. Wildlife must be respected; carelessness can hurt.

Misaskim spoke to Lieutenant Deming Lindsley of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's Division of Law Enforcement. Lieutenant Lindsley has served as a conservation officer for over 40 years and according to his colleagues, "He knows more about wildlife than anyone else in the entire state." Lieutenant Lindsley was kind enough to share some of his extensive experience and expertise with us. He graciously provided valuable tips for those who will be spending the summer in the Catskills.

## "Bear" in Mind: Get Rid of Garbage

**Misaskim:** What should we be aware of when we are out camping, or if we are living in a summer camp or bungalow colony?

**Lieutenant Lindsley:** It is critically important to recognize that bears are the number one concern in summer camps. In general, though, bears don't really bother people who are out on a camping trip.

**Misaskim:** When are bears most likely to appear?

**LL:** Bears come only if there's garbage easily available to them. Generally speaking, bears won't appear during the daytime unless there's food that is accessible. In fact, if they do come during the day, it is a sign that garbage has been easily accessible in the past. When I say accessible food, I'm not talking about a one-time cook-out. Bears don't know about the cook-out, and they'll be in their dens. But if, on a daily basis, remnants of food such as hot dogs and hamburgers are

left at the campsite, the bears will eventually realize that this is a good location for them.

**Misaskim:** What can we do to prevent bears from entering inhabited areas?

**LL:** The key is to make sure you clean up and that no food is available for the bears. Then you will not see a bear during the daytime. Make sure garbage is placed in properly sealed dumpsters that do not overflow, and from which bags of garbage do not fall out. Of course, it's up to camps and bungalow colonies to make sure that enough garbage pickups are scheduled. Most camps now have either compactors or special containers.

Bears are opportunists. They're only going to go where they can find food. When there's no food available, they go elsewhere.

This problem, unfortunately, turned into a tragedy about 12 years ago. A bear was heading for the garbage, which was apparently lying around on the ground because the dumpsters were full. It grabbed the baby. Since that terrible incident, we have



taken steps to ensure that such an incident never occurs again.

This was the first time we ever had anything like that in the State of New York. Since that incident, we've had a few problems with bears coming in, but we've nipped them in the bud. Once we insisted that camps take care of the garbage problem, the bears went away.

## Keep Your Distance from Wild Animals

**LL:** Another important concern is rabies. Most commonly, raccoons and foxes are the animals that spread rabies, although several other species of mammals can also carry and transmit rabies.

**Misaskim:** How can one tell whether an animal is rabid?

**LL:** If a wild animal isn't afraid of human beings, it's probably sick and it is best to avoid it. All too often, people say, "Oh look, isn't that cute? It doesn't seem to be afraid," and they then attempt to get closer. This is a big mistake and could turn into a problem. Just stay away. Observe animals if you see one in the wild. Observe it, but don't get close to it.

**Misaskim:** How does the state deal with a wild animal if it's behaving strangely?

**LL:** If notified, the state authorities will come and destroy the animal. For example, if a raccoon keeps coming to a specific location, and seems quite friendly and unafraid, it should just be destroyed. It doesn't have to be tested for rabies unless it's been in contact with people. If we know that it has scratched someone or been handled by somebody, then it is important that we catch it and have it tested for rabies.

## Steer Clear of Deer

**Misaskim:** Another important issue is that of meeting up with deer, especially while driving.

**LL:** Yes, and that's a difficult one because a deer will sometimes bolt across a road completely unexpectedly. People who have not been raised in the country or who are not familiar with the habits of deer could be unprepared for the unexpected, and could very easily hit it.

**Misaskim:** What should drivers do if they see a deer?

**LL:** The best answer is to blow your horn. The deer is mesmerized by headlights; it's confused, and sometimes it'll bolt right out in front of the car. So if you see a deer on the bank of the road or close to the side of the road, just blow the horn, because the sound will travel. The sound of the horn doesn't confuse deer the way headlights do. In such circumstances, the deer will usually remain standing on the spot or it will retreat into the forest.

**Misaskim:** Is there any sign to look out for that can tip one off to the fact that there are deer around?

**LL:** The female will have her young with her, and they are sometimes moving around. So I always say, "If you see a deer crossing the road, don't look at the deer that already crossed the road – look behind it, because there may be a fawn coming across as well."

Many people who see a deer running across the road are so busy looking at it that they collide with a second deer that is following it. Usually deer are not solitary animals; they'll travel in a group. So if you see a deer, always be on the lookout for other deer running behind it.

**Misaskim:** Is there any particular behavior that drivers should avoid?

**LL:** Don't swerve. Many people have serious accidents because they swerve to miss a deer. What you should do is slow down as much you can, but continue to drive straight ahead. Once again, don't swerve—because that's causes the car to run off the road or hit a tree or another object.

**Misaskim:** What should a driver do if he or she does hit a deer?

**LL:** If you hit a deer, then you should contact any police personnel you can reach — such as the State Police, the Sheriff's Department, the local PD or the conservation police. You can also contact 911, which will immediately dispatch a car, because it's a motor vehicle accident.

Before wrapping up our conversation, Lieutenant Lindsey had one more message for our readers: Vacationers shouldn't be too concerned about

spending their summers in close proximity to wildlife. Actually, people are much safer in the woods than they are when they are in "civilization." Criminal acts and accidents occur on the city's streets. The chance of encountering such problems in the city is more likely than experiencing a problem with a wild animal in the country. Basically these chance occurrences are very, very rare. They hardly ever happen. So just enjoy the outdoors, and the beauty of nature—but do follow the basic rules. If one is properly educated and does the right thing, then there is absolutely no reason to be concerned or worried.

## About Deer

The deer found in New York State are White-Tailed Deer, so called because of the white patch beneath their tails. Adult males, or bucks, can weigh 130-300 pounds while females, known as does, average 90-200 pounds. Males grow a new set of antlers late each spring and they shed them midwinter.

Deer are usually shy of humans and will run away. They only attack people when they feel cornered. Lieutenant Lindsley informs us that they are mostly active in the fall. Deer are agrarian in nature so they usually travel in family groups. A doe will often be followed by her one or two fawns.

## About Bears

The Catskill Mountains are home to approximately 2,000 black bears. Adult males average 300 pounds in weight while females are usually around 160 pounds. Although they seem to lumber around, bears are really extremely agile. They can sprint at speeds up to 40 MPH, they climb trees well and even swim.

Avoid startling a bear by making noise so it can hear. In the unlikely chance that you meet one, don't run away, corner it or try to stare it down. Just look down, turn a bit sideways and back off slowly. If you see a black bear rear up on its hind legs, it's not angry or davening Minchah. It's trying to figure out who you are by smelling you.

### Poison Ivy



### Poison Oak



### Poison Sumac



First comes the itching, then a red rash, and then blisters. These symptoms of poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac can start from a few hours to several days after exposure to the plant oil found in the sap of these poisonous plants.

It is not contagious. The rash will only occur where the plant oil has touched the skin, so a person with poison ivy can't spread it on the body by scratching. It may seem like the rash is spreading if it appears over time instead of all at once. But this is either because the plant oil is absorbed at different rates in different parts of the body or because of repeated exposure to contaminated objects or plant oil trapped under the fingernails.

Wash your skin in cool water as soon as possible if you come in contact with a poisonous plant. The sooner you cleanse the skin, the greater the chance that you can remove the plant oil or help prevent further spread.

Don't scratch the blisters. Bacteria from under your fingernails can get into the blisters and cause an infection. The rash, blisters, and itch normally disappear in several weeks without any treatment. But you can relieve the itch by

- using wet compresses or soaking in cool water
- applying OTC topical corticosteroid preparations or taking prescription oral corticosteroids
- applying topical OTC skin protectants, such as calamine, labeled to dry oozing and weeping or to relieve itching and irritation caused by poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac

(Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)



### Tick Bites:

Ticks are found in most grassy and wooded areas in the world. They carry several diseases. In New York State, the most widespread disease spread by ticks is Lyme disease. Repellants can be effective in preventing tick bites. However, the New York State Health Department cautions users to carefully review the manufacturers' directives in order to avoid possible negative health effects.

When in grassy and wooded areas, wear light-colored clothing to facilitate easy tick-spotting. Tuck pants into socks, and shirts into pants, and check clothes and skin for ticks every 2-3 hours of outdoor activity. Brush the ticks off if they are found. At the end of the day, do a thorough inspection.

If a tick is attached, grasp the mouth parts as close as possible to the skin, using tweezers. Disinfect the bite site thoroughly and wash your hands.

### Bee Stings:

To avoid a painful prick, make sure not to walk outside barefoot.



Keep away from areas where there are beehives or large numbers of bees.

If one is stung, never squeeze the stinger or use tweezers, this may result in more venom being pumped into the body. Instead, scrape off the stinger, either with a fingernail or by wiping it with a large piece of gauze. Wash the area with soap and water, and apply a cool compress. If there is any indication of a severe reaction, such as swelling of the face, mouth, or tongue, difficulty swallowing, speaking or breathing, or dizziness, call 911.

### Mosquito Bites:



You are most likely to be bitten by a mosquito at dawn or dusk, when these insects are most active. Protect yourself from mosquito bites by wearing long-sleeved, light-colored clothing and long pants. As with ticks, repellents can be used to avoid mosquito bites. Prevent mosquitoes from breeding near your home by eliminating any stagnant water.

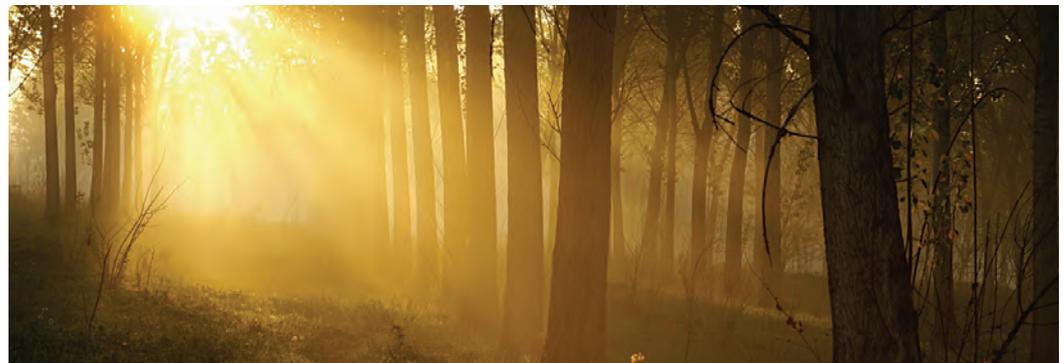
In order to relieve itching, apply hydrocortisone cream, calamine lotion, or a paste of one teaspoon of water and one teaspoon of dry meat tenderizer, mixed together. If you experience a strong reaction, take an oral antihistamine.

### Sun Safety:

Overexposure to the sun poses a very great risk to our health. The sun emits three types of ultraviolet (UV) rays, two of which penetrate the Earth's ozone layer and reach us. The UV rays which hit our exposed skin can damage it in the short term by burning and in the long term through premature skin aging and skin cancer R"L. It is especially important to avoid keeping babies under six months of age in direct sunlight.

UV rays are the strongest in the summer months, and especially between the hours of 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Outdoor activities should be limited during that time, or should be enjoyed in the shade. Wear clothing that covers the skin.

It is important to wear sunscreen. It should be rated at SPF 30 or higher and should be labeled "broad spectrum," meaning that it protects the wearer from all harmful UV rays. Ideally, apply sunscreen 30 minutes before sun exposure to give it time to work on the skin.



## Summer Safety Tips



## Summer Playground Safety

Summer means spending more time at the playground. Check out the following top ten summer playground tips to ensure that your playground adventures are injury free.

1. Adult presence is needed to watch for potential hazards, observe, intercede and facilitate play when necessary.
2. All children should play on appropriate equipment. Preschoolers (ages 2-5) and school aged children (ages 5 -12) are developmentally different and need different equipment located in separate areas to keep the playground safe and fun for all.
3. Appropriate fall surfacing material should be present. Nearly 70 percent of all playground injuries are related to children falling to the ground. Acceptable surfaces include wood fiber or mulch, pea gravel, sand, poured-in-place rubber, rubber mats or rubber tiles. Playground surfaces should not be concrete, asphalt, grass, blacktop, packed dirt or rocks.

4. Equipment should be safe. Check to make sure the equipment is anchored safely in the ground, all equipment pieces are in good working order, S-hooks are entirely closed, bolts are not protruding and there are no exposed footings. Equipment should be free of rust, splinters, and missing parts.
5. No strings or ropes should be present. Strings on clothing or ropes used for play can cause accidental strangulation if caught of equipment. Ropes used as part of playground equipment should be secured on both ends.
6. Equipment should not be too hot. Check for hot surfaces on playground equipment before allowing children to play on it. If shade structures do not protect the equipment from the sun, the surface can become extremely hot and can even cause burns on the skin.

7. Bicycle helmets should not be worn on equipment. Children should not wear bike helmets when playing on playground equipment. Helmets can easily get caught and cause strangulation.
8. Children should be dressed appropriately. It is important for children to wear closed shoes and appropriate clothing.
9. Children should be protected from the sun. Encourage children to use UVA and UVB protective clothing and sunglasses, suggest playing in shaded areas, and, of course, always use sunscreen.
10. Children should be protected from extreme temperatures. A heat index above 90° F may pose a health risk to children. Be watchful of the temperature while outdoors and keep children well hydrated.



## Bicycle and Scooter Safety

- Do not push your child to ride a 2-wheeled bike without training wheels until he or she is ready. Consider the child's coordination and desire to learn to ride. Stick with coaster brakes, not hand brakes, until your child is older and more experienced. Consider a balance bike with no pedals for young children to learn riding skills.

- Take your child with you when you shop for the bike, so that he or she can try it out. The value of a properly fitting bike far outweighs the value of surprising your child with a new one. Buy a bike that is the right size, not one your child has to "grow into." Oversized bikes are especially dangerous.

- Your child needs to wear a helmet on every bike ride, no matter how short or how close to home. Many injuries happen in driveways, on sidewalks, and on bike paths, not just on streets. Children learn best by observing you. Set the example: Whenever you ride, put on your helmet.

- When purchasing a helmet, look for a label or sticker that says the helmet meets the CPSC safety standard.

- A helmet should be worn so that it is level on the head and covers the forehead, not tipped forward or backwards. The strap should be securely fastened with about 2 fingers able to fit between chin and strap.

The helmet should be snug on the head, but not overly tight. Skin should move with the helmet when moved from side to side. If needed, the helmet's sizing pads can help improve the fit.

- Skateboard and scooter-riders should wear protective gear; helmets are particularly important for preventing and minimizing head injuries. Riders should wear helmets that meet ASTM or other approved safety standards, and that are specifically designed to reduce the effects of skating hazards.

- While in-line skating or using Heelys, only skate on designated paths or rinks, and not in the street.

- Most accidents occur due to falls. Inexperienced riders should only ride as fast as they can comfortably slow down, and they should practice falling on grass or other soft surfaces. Before riding, skateboarders should survey the riding terrain for obstacles such as potholes, rocks or any debris.

- Children should never ride skateboards or scooters in or near moving traffic.

- Riders should never skate alone. Children under the age of eight should be closely supervised at all times.

(source AAP.org)

## Summer Safety Tips



## Food Poisoning:

Foodborne illnesses increase during the summer because microorganisms grow faster in the warm summer months. Most foodborne bacteria grow fastest at temperatures from 90 to 110 °F. Bacteria also need moisture to flourish, and summer weather is often hot and humid.

Given the right circumstances, harmful bacteria can quickly multiply on food to large numbers. When this happens, someone eating the food can get sick.

Also, more people are cooking outside at picnics, barbecues, and on camping trips. The safety controls that a kitchen provides — thermostat-controlled cooking, refrigeration, and washing facilities — are usually not available.

### Clean: Wash Hands and Surfaces Often

Unwashed hands are a prime cause of foodborne illness.

- Wash your hands with warm, soapy water before handling food and after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and handling pets.
- When eating away from home, find out if there's a source of potable (safe drinking) water. If not, bring water for preparation and cleaning. Or pack clean, wet, disposable washcloths or moist towelettes and paper towels for cleaning hands and surfaces.

### Separate: Don't Cross-Contaminate

Cross-contamination during preparation, grilling, and serving food is a prime cause of foodborne illness.

- When packing the cooler chest for an outing, wrap raw meats securely; prevent raw meat juices from coming in contact with ready-to-eat food.
- Wash plates, utensils, and cutting boards that held the raw meat or poultry before using again for cooked food.

### Cook: Cook to Safe Temperatures

Food safety experts agree that food is safely cooked when it is heated

for a long enough time and at a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria that cause foodborne illness.

- Take your food thermometer along. Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often browns very fast on the outside, so be sure that meats are cooked thoroughly. Check them with a food thermometer.
- Cook all raw beef, lamb and veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145 °F as measured with a food thermometer before removing meat from the heat source. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least three minutes before carving or consuming. For reasons of personal preference, consumers may choose to cook meat to higher temperatures.
- Cook all raw ground beef, lamb, and veal to an internal temperature of 160 °F as measured with a food thermometer.
- Cook all poultry to a safe minimum internal temperature of 165 °F as measured with a food thermometer.
- Cook meat and poultry completely at the picnic site. Partial cooking of food ahead of time allows bacteria to survive and multiply to the point that subsequent cooking cannot destroy them.

### Chill: Refrigerate Promptly

Holding food at an unsafe temperature is a prime cause of foodborne illness. Keep cold food cold!

- Cold refrigerated perishable food like luncheon meats, cooked meats, chicken, and potato or pasta salads should be kept in an insulated cooler packed with several inches of ice, ice packs, or containers of frozen water.
- Consider packing canned beverages in one cooler and perishable food in another cooler, because the beverage cooler will probably be opened frequently.
- Keep the cooler in the coolest part of the car, and place in the shade or shelter, out of the sun, whenever possible.
- Preserve the cold temperature of the cooler by replenishing the ice as soon as it starts melting.
- Take-out food: If you don't plan to eat take-out food within 2 hours of purchase, plan ahead and chill the food in your refrigerator before packing for your outing.

### Leftovers?

Food left out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours may not be safe to eat. Above 90 °F, food should not be left out over 1 hour. Play it safe; put leftover perishables back on ice once you finish eating so they do not spoil or become unsafe to eat.

**If you have any doubts, throw it out.**



## Fireworks CAN Be Dangerous!

You can help prevent serious eye or burn injuries by adhering to the following precautions during a firework display at your camp.

- Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- Avoid buying fireworks that are packaged in brown paper because this is often a sign that the fireworks were made for professional displays and that they could pose a danger to consumers.
- Always have an adult supervise fireworks activities. Parents don't realize that young children suffer injuries from sparklers. **Sparklers burn at temperatures of about 2,000 degrees – hot enough to burn some metals.**
- Never place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse. Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting fireworks.
- Never try to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap.
- Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
- Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal or glass containers.
- After fireworks complete their burning, douse the spent device with plenty of water from a bucket or hose before discarding it to prevent a trash fire.

All consumer fireworks are banned in New York State except for those who have a permit. For information on obtaining a permit, contact the New York State Dept. of Labor.

(Source: cpsc.gov)



# 10 Summer Fire Safety Tips

**Do** install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors with working batteries in your summer home.



**Do** make sure to have a fire extinguisher in your bungalow and know how to use it.



**Do not** try to ignite a water tank heater on your own as it may explode. Request your colony managers to relight it for you.



**Do** keep your water heater set at a safe setting to prevent scalding.



**Do not** overload the circuit-breakers by putting more than 2 plugs in the outlet or more than 1 high-voltage appliance.

**Do not** leave Shabbos candles unattended in the bungalow.



**Do** use a heavy-duty Shabbos clock for your air conditioner in order to prevent a fire.



**Do not** use the oven to warm the bungalow. You may risk carbon monoxide poisoning.



**Do** remove everything within 3 feet of a space heater and make sure to turn it off when leaving the bungalow.



**Do** designate an adult to keep watch over camp fires at all times.

## Summer Safety Tips



### Use ATVs and Golf Carts Appropriately

Every summer Hatzalah is called to deal with accidents involving ATVs and golf carts. You should be aware that there are laws and safety regulations that apply to driving ATVs, golf carts – even riding bikes. These rules cover when, where and how you may use such vehicles.

You must make sure that the vehicle is in proper working condition and that the required safety gear, such as helmets, are worn. Helmets save lives.

Finally, children and golf carts do not mix. There have been too many accidents involving underage drivers, kids falling off golf carts while standing in the back for a ride, etc. These vehicles can be fun, but they must be used with the appropriate caution.

- Don't ride double. Passengers are frequently injured when riding ATVs. Most ATVs are designed to carry only one person: the driver. Passengers can make ATVs unstable and difficult to control.
- Because the nervous systems and judgment of children younger than 16 years have not fully developed, off-road vehicles are particularly dangerous for them.



### Lawn Mower Safety

- Only use a mower with a control that stops the mower blade from moving if the handle is let go.
- Children young than 16 years should not be allowed to use ride-on mowers.
- Children younger than 12 years should not be allowed to use walk-behind mowers.
- Make sure that sturdy shoes (not sandals or sneakers) are worn while mowing.
- Prevent injuries from flying objects, such as stones or toys, by picking up objects from the lawn before mowing begins. Have anyone who uses a mower wear hearing and eye protection.
- Do not pull the mower backward or mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary, and carefully look for children behind you when you mow in reverse.
- Always turn off the mower and wait for the blades to stop completely before removing the grass catcher, unclogging the discharge chute, or crossing gravel paths, roads, or other areas.
- Do not allow children to ride as passengers on ride-on mowers.
- Keep children out of the yard while mowing.
- Drive up and down slopes, not across, to prevent mower rollover.
- Keep guards, shields, switches, and safety devices in proper working order at all times.
- Children in vicinity of running lawnmowers should wear polycarbonate protective eye wear at all times.

(Source: AAP.org)

GAS STATIONS THAT SELL  
**KOSHER SNACKS**  
ON YOUR ROUTE  
TO & FROM THE CATSKILLS

**RT 17  
NORTH**

**Exxon**  
178 Rt. 17 N.  
Rochelle Park, NJ

**Mobil**  
360 Rt. 17 N.  
Upper Saddle River, NJ  
*In the middle of the hill*

**Valero (formerly Mobil)**  
193 Rt. 17 N.  
Mahwah, NJ  
*(Last Mobil before the Thruway)*

**RT 17  
SOUTH**

**International Motor Plaza**  
Truck Stop, Mahwah, NJ

**Valero (formerly Mobil)**  
*(1st Mobil after the Thruway)*  
198 Rt. 17 S., Mahwah, NJ

**Exxon**  
75 Rt. 17 S.  
Ramsey, NJ

**Exxon On the Run**  
Ridgewood, NJ

**RT 4  
EAST**

**Exxon**  
120 Rt. 4 E.  
Englewood, NJ

**Exxon**  
484 Rt. 4 E.  
Englewood, NJ  
*(Last Exxon before the  
GWB)*

**RT 4  
WEST**

**Exxon**  
2338 Rt. 4 W.  
Ft. Lee, NJ *(1st Exxon after GWB)*

**Exxon**  
119 Rt. 4 W.  
Englewood, NJ

**Lukoil (formerly Mobil)**  
20 Rt. 4 W.  
Hackensack, NJ

**PALISADES  
PARKWAY**

**Citgo Station**  
Between exits  
4 & 5

**MONROE**

**Exxon**  
Harriman, NY  
at JCT. 17, 6, NYS  
Thruway



**Highway Advisory Telephone  
System** - exclusively for the  
George Washington Bridge:

Call **1-877-PA-ROADS** (727-6237)

**Press 1** - To report an emergency at the GWB

**Press 2** - For traffic conditions. Once at this  
message:

**Press 1** - For New York bound travel time for  
the upper and lower levels

**Press 2** - For New Jersey bound travel time  
for the upper and lower levels

**Press \*** - To repeat instructions

**Road Inform** - Informs  
motorists of traffic conditions for  
the summer:

Road Inform traffic reports & alerts are  
broadcast on the **Kol Mevasser Hotline**  
at **212-444-1100**.

**511NY & NJ511** - Free  
real-time traffic information in  
New York & New Jersey:

Dial **511** (or in NJ, the toll free number  
**1.866.511.NJDT (6538)**.) An  
automated voice system will prompt  
callers to choose from options such as  
Traffic, Routes and Urban Areas. Callers  
can respond verbally or by using the  
telephone's keypad.

**BE ובלכתך בדרך - מקיים !**  
**DURING YOUR DRIVE UP TO THE  
MOUNTAINS, HOW ABOUT A TORAH TAPE?**

# MINCHA AREA

Sloatsburg New York



# מנחה עריע

תפלת מרדכי

בס"ד

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### Regarding The Minyanim At The Sloatsburg Rest Plaza

Starting Thursday June 20 evening

**The Sloatsburg Rest Plaza will now be open for Mincha and Maariv each Thursday evening from 5 p.m. to 12 a.m. during the summer months. These minyanim will take place at the 2<sup>nd</sup> level parking area.**

During previous years, significant traffic disturbances were created on the N.Y. Thruway as a result of travelers converging on the Plaza for prayer services. This led the N.Y. State Thruway Authority to ban davening at the meeting area.

After several discussions with the State Police and the N.Y. State Thruway Authority, it was agreed that davening will be permitted at the Tefilos Mordche Mincha Area on the second parking level, which should not disrupt traffic conditions. Please note that the sale of food or other merchandise is forbidden there.

The Friedman family has been working consistently to facilitate these arrangements in memory of our dear father, R' Mordechai ben Menachem Zev H'Levi. Our father dedicated his life to serving the community and it's our sincerest desire to continue his tradition and legacy.

We have printed Mincha and Maariv Siddurim that will be available at the rest stop, and we have arranged for kosher vending machines as well, so that travelers can obtain sandwiches, snacks, and drinks.

Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions or suggestions at: 845.445.7848 or via e-mail: [Info@MinchaArea.org](mailto:Info@MinchaArea.org).

**A happy and a safe summer season!**

**Rabbi Abe Friedman    Rabbi Joel Friedman**

New York State Thruway Mincha Area Tfilos Mordche    Sloatsburg NY    T.845.445.7848    E. [Info@MinchaArea.org](mailto:Info@MinchaArea.org)

# You're Not Handicapped?

## Don't Park There!

We all know the feeling: you're in a rush and every space in the parking lot seems to be taken. You finally spot an opening right there in front of the door. Delighted, you pull up...only to realize that the reason the spot is open is because it is reserved for the disabled.

"But there are no disabled people here now," you tell yourself with a quick glance around. (Would you really have noticed if there were?) "I'll just be a few minutes and no one will know the difference."

Did you ever stop to wonder why the best spots are reserved for the disabled, even though there never seem to be any disabled people around?

We hope you will never have to learn the answer.

Despite what most of us think, there are plenty of disabled individuals in our communities. They may drive up at any time. The few minutes you will save yourself by taking the spot nearest to the entrance of the building pale in significance when compared to the suffering and anguish you may be causing someone else—suffering that is completely unnecessary if you would just have stopped to think for a few seconds.

Harav Dovid Cohen, *shlita*, stated that the misuse of reserved handicapped parking spaces or removal of such spaces is *gezel es harabim*. Harav Malkiel Kotler, *shlita*, stated "*al tgzilu dal*" applies.

State and federal law require all parking lots, including those located on private properties, to have parking spaces designated especially for use by the disabled. It is against the law for anyone to park there without a special permit or license. Even a car that carries a handicapped permit or license may only park in a reserved space if the individual with the disability is present at the time.

In addition, the area next to the reserved parking spot is marked with diagonal blue lines. That area may not be used for parking by anyone, not even

by the disabled. It is there to permit wheelchair access to those who are using those spaces. You should never park there under any circumstances.

People suffering from disabilities have told Misaskim that they choose which shul to *daven* in based on which one has available disabled parking. They already know which shuls in their neighborhood to avoid because other people always take the reserved spots, or because no such spots exist. Some disabled individuals skip *davening* in shul altogether because it is just too difficult for them to drag themselves across the parking lot, while others enjoy the easy access that should have been theirs.

Speaking about those who park illegally in a reserved spot in front of a shul or *beis medrash*, Reb Chaim Kanievsky, *shlita*, has said that the *davening* and learning of those who park illegally have the status of a *mitzvah haba b'aveirah*. He further stated that their Torah or *tefillah* will not be blessed with *hatzlacha*. In effect, their efforts are worthless. What a shame!

In his Friday night address at last December's Agudah Convention, Rabbi Paysach Krohn, noted lecturer and mohel, discussed the anguish that people cause when they park illegally in reserved spaces. He mentioned a woman who had to carry her disabled teenaged daughter, "like a sack of potatoes," through the parking lot of a doctor's office that is frequented by members of the *heimishe* community, because someone had occupied the reserved space near the door.

Later, Rabbi Krohn received an e-mail from someone who suffered a similar experience in the very same parking lot – only worse. This man had two children who could not walk. When he arrived at the office, he found that someone had parked in a manner that blocked not one, but two reserved spots. The father was forced to park three rows over, help one child into the wheelchair, place the second child on the first child's lap, and then navigate



the snowdrifts with one hand, while clutching the second child's walker with the other.

As he arrived breathless at the entrance, the offending driver walked out and headed for his car. The entire scene was witnessed by a non-Jew, who was incredulous at what he saw. Needless to say, it was hardly a *kiddush Hashem*.

Please, stop for a second and think about those less fortunate than you!

You can do a tremendous *chessed* for others by making sure those blue reserved parking spots are always open and accessible. Stay away from reserved parking if you are not disabled. Those spaces are not for you. If you see people who are using those spaces inappropriately, let them know politely that they do not belong there. Make sure those spots are free of litter, snow, or anything else that may inhibit their use by their rightful disabled users.

In the merit of caring about others, may Hashem spare you from experiencing such distress.

# Seat Belt Laws

## New York State

**Seat belts must be worn in the following situations:**

All passengers in the front seat of a motor vehicle must wear a seat belt.

All children under the age of 16 must wear a seat belt in the back seat.

Children from birth through age eight are required to ride in an appropriate child restraint system.

If a child is under age four, he or she must be properly secured in a federally-approved child safety seat that is attached to a vehicle by a safety belt or universal child restraint anchorage (LATCH) system. A child under age four who weighs more than 40 pounds may be restrained in a booster seat with a lap and shoulder belt. A child of age 4, 5, 6 or 7 must use a booster seat with lap and shoulder belt or a child safety seat. (The child and safety restraint system must meet the height and weight recommendations of the restraint manufacturer.)

Exception: A child more than 4'9" tall or more than 100 pounds is allowed to use a seat belt that has both a lap belt and a shoulder harness. To use the seat belt, the child must be able to sit straight up against the vehicle's seat back with his or her knees bent comfortably over the edge of the seat. The lap belt should be placed low and tight across the upper thighs; the shoulder belt should rest tightly but comfortably across the child's chest and shoulder (collar bone) without touching the throat. If the seat belt does not fit properly, the child should use a booster seat with a lap and shoulder belt.

**A booster seat can be used only with a lap and shoulder belt together.** If all the combination lap and shoulder belt positions in the vehicle are already occupied by children using child safety seats or booster seats, a child who ordinarily would use a booster seat should be restrained using only the lap belt.

**An appropriate child safety restraint system:**

- Is required for all children until their 8th birthday and,
- Must meet the size and weight requirements for the child based on the Federal requirements and the recommendations of the manufacturer, and
- Can be a child safety seat, a harness, a vest or a booster seat attached with the vehicle seat belt or latch system, but not the vehicle seat belt alone, and
- Should not be used in the front seat of the vehicle.

If the child is eight years old and is under 4'9" tall or weighs less than 100 pounds, it is recommended that you continue to use a child restraint system.

(Reprinted from: [dmv.ny.gov](http://dmv.ny.gov))

## New Jersey

Applies to all passenger vehicles including vans, pickup trucks and SUV's, that are required to be equipped with seat belts.

Applies to all passengers, who are at least eight years of age but less than 18 years of age, and each driver and front seat passenger of a passenger automobile, operated on a street or highway. All of these occupants are required to wear a properly adjusted and fastened seat belt system.

On January 18, 2010, legislation was signed into law requiring all occupants to buckle up, regardless of their seating position in a vehicle. A secondary offense, the new law allows police to issue summonses to unbuckled back seat occupants, 18 years of age and older, when the vehicle they are riding in is stopped for another violation.

- Makes the driver responsible for proper seat belt use by all occupants who are under the age of 18.
- Children up to age 8 or 80 pounds must ride in a safety or booster seat in the rear seat of the vehicle. If there is no rear seat, the child must sit in the front seat secured by a child safety seat or booster seat.
- Children under age eight who weigh more than 80 pounds must wear a seat belt anywhere in the vehicle.
- Passengers age 8 to 18 (regardless of weight) must wear a seat belt anywhere inside a vehicle.

(Reprinted from NJ Division of Highway Traffic System)

## Connecticut

Anyone riding in the front seat of a vehicle, regardless of the occupant's age, must wear a seat belt. All rear-seat passengers between the ages of 4 to 16 must be restrained by an appropriate safety system.

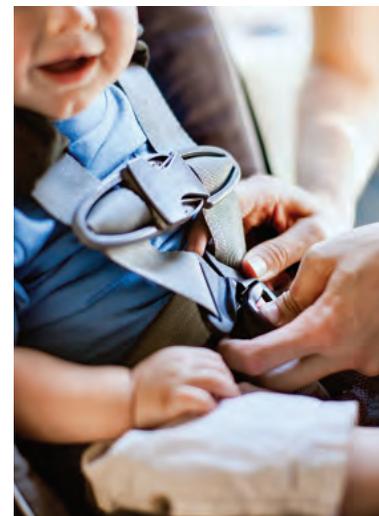
Drivers not wearing a seat belt, or failing to ensure that occupants under the age of 16 are wearing a seat belt, can be charged with a \$92 fine. A police officer may pull a driver over solely for not wearing a seat belt.

Children must ride in a proper child safety seat until they are over six years old and 60 pounds. In addition, infants must ride in a rear-facing seat until they are one years old and 20 pounds.

After a child exceeds these limits, the child must be secured in a booster seat with a lap and shoulder belt, until they outgrow the booster seat.

Failing to follow the child safety seat rules can result in a fine and an order to complete a car seat education class.

(Reprinted from DMV.org)



# Texting Laws

## New York

Under current law, probationary and junior licenses are suspended for 60 days for violations such as speeding, reckless driving, or following too closely behind another vehicle. Such licenses are revoked for 6 months (for probationary licenses) or 60 days (for junior licenses) if there is another violation within 6 months of the license being restored.

As of June 2013, the Governor's new legislation imposes the same penalties on drivers with probationary and junior licenses for texting-while-driving that they now receive for speeding and reckless driving: 60-day suspensions for first convictions and revocations of 60 days (for junior licenses) or 6 months (for probationary licenses) for subsequent convictions within 6 months of the time a license is restored after suspension.



## New Jersey

New Jersey prohibits texting and use of handheld cell phones for all drivers. Novice drivers are prohibited from all cell phone use.

All drivers are prohibited from texting while driving.

### How is it Enforced?

The fine for violating New Jersey's cell phone or texting laws is \$100. New Jersey's cell phone and texting laws are considered "primary" laws. A primary law means that an officer can pull you over for the offense without having to witness some other violation. That is, the officer sees you texting and issues a citation.

## Connecticut

Handheld cell phone use and texting is prohibited for all Connecticut drivers. All cell phone use (handheld and hands-free) is prohibited for Connecticut bus drivers and for novice drivers.

All Connecticut drivers are prohibited from texting – that is, typing, sending or reading a text message with a hand-held mobile telephone or mobile electronic device. Exceptions to the rule exist for emergency calls and calls made while using a hands-free device.

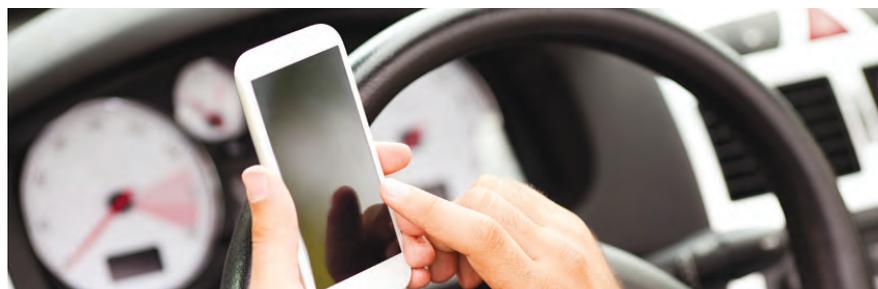
### How is it Enforced?

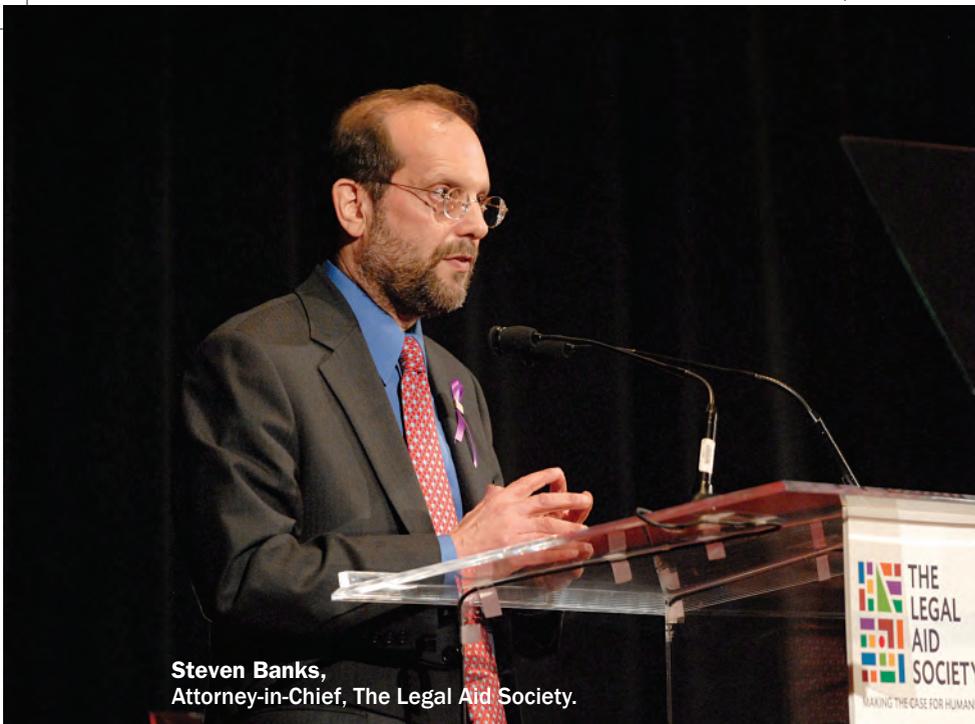
If a driver is stopped for using a handheld cell phone, the fine for a first offense will be \$125 and a second offense will cost \$250. Subsequent offenses will cost the offender \$400. The fines for texting are \$100, \$150, and \$200 for first, second, and third offenders. If a teen driver is ticketed for using a cell phone or text messaging the following penalties will be applied:

First offense: 30-day license suspension and a \$125 license restoration fee plus court fines. Second and all subsequent offenses: a 6-month suspension, or until the teen driver reaches the age of 18, whichever is longer. There is also a \$125 license restoration fee, plus court fines. Connecticut's handheld cell phone and texting laws are considered "primary" laws, as is the prohibition on all cell phones for bus drivers. A primary law means that an officer can pull you over for the offense without having to witness some other violation. That is, the officer sees you texting and issues a citation.

### New Laws for New York

License Holders	Old Law Cell Phone and Texting Convictions			New Law Cell Phone and Texting Convictions		
	Suspension	Revocation	Points	Suspension	Revocation	Points
Probationary	No	No	3	60 days for first conviction	6 months for subsequent conviction within 6 months of license restoration	5
Junior	No	No	3	60 days for first conviction	60 days for subsequent conviction within 6 months of license restoration	5
All others	No	No	3	No	No	5





**Steven Banks,**  
Attorney-in-Chief, The Legal Aid Society.

## The Legal Aid Society: Legal Assistance in Times of Need

In most instances, it strikes like a thunderbolt on a clear spring day! Suddenly, the predictability of one's daily routine is unexpectedly interrupted by an unanticipated arrest, followed by court appearances, and unfamiliar legal procedures. If an individual is suddenly forced to navigate the justice system, it is important that he or she receive competent legal representation in order to ensure the best possible outcome.

For many people, however, retaining an expert attorney is simply unaffordable. They find themselves forced to resort to borrowing enormous sums of money in order to pay for top legal representation. This leaves them buried under mountains of debt for years to come. The tragedy is that in many cases, retaining a private lawyer is simply unnecessary. "I've seen with my own eyes that public defenders are really very, very good," says Judge Noach Dear, a New York City Civil Court Judge. "They're extremely dedicated and definitely on par with any top attorney, and it doesn't cost you anything."

For clarification, Misaskim spoke with Steven Banks, attorney-in-chief for New York City's Legal Aid Society. Banks accords high marks to his staff of over 1,000 lawyers for their passion, professionalism, and dedication to their clients. "Our staff of lawyers is dedicated and is committed to providing representation to families and individuals who have nowhere else to turn. Our lawyers choose to be legal aid lawyers in order to provide access to justice." Mr. Banks adds that since being a legal aid attorney is a highly coveted position, the Legal Aid Society receives many more applications than it can possibly accommodate. The result is a staff of "the best and brightest attorneys in the city."

### The Legal Aid Society

As stated on its website, the Legal Aid Society's mission is simple yet powerful: "No New Yorker should be denied access to justice because of poverty." Founded in 1876 by a German philanthropic organization, the aim at that time was to provide representation to German immigrants whose rights were often trampled on by resentful native New Yorkers. First known as Der Deutscher Rechts-Schutz Verein (The German Legal Aid Society), its single attorney handled 212 cases

in its first year and triple that number in its second year of operation.

In 1896, the Society changed its name to The Legal Aid Society to reflect its shift from serving only German immigrants to serving immigrants from any country in the world in need of legal services. As New York City grew and its population expanded, the need for The Legal Aid Society's services multiplied, and by 1911 its lawyers handled over 34,000 legal matters in that year alone.

A century later, The Legal Aid Society remains true to the ideals of its

founders and continues to passionately provide legal services to lower income New Yorkers in all five boroughs. Today, its staff handles about 300,000 legal matters each year through a full range of services.

### Legal Services

#### **Criminal Rights:**

Referring to criminal rights cases, Banks explains that defendants "have a 'right to counsel,' meaning that the government pays for representation." Criminal cases represented by Legal Aid

range from relatively minor infractions such as disorderly conduct to extremely serious cases such as murder. According to Banks, however, “Even minor cases can have significant impact on an individual as far as housing, employment, immigration status, and other matters are concerned, so whether a charge is minor or serious, our staff provides the same quality of zealous representation.”

Attorney Joel Schmidt, a legal aid defense attorney and a member of our community, explained to Misaskim why legal aid lawyers are so effective in defending the rights of New Yorkers. As he explains, “They are fantastic attorneys who are passionate about the work they do and the help they provide to their clients. They are on the front lines – in the trenches – every single day. They know the significance of each case and they can quickly present an appropriate defense strategy.”

Schmidt explains that as an additional advantage, legal aid lawyers have instant access to social workers, investigators, paralegals, and hundreds of knowledgeable colleagues. “I also have access to other divisions within Legal Aid, including the immigration, housing, health law, employment law, appeals, and disability advocacy units, so I can easily make a referral to another division within Legal Aid if a client has other needs that need to be addressed.”

Mr. Banks explains the procedure involved in accessing a legal aid attorney. “The city is required to bring an individual accused of a crime before a judge within 24 hours of arrest, and it is at that point that the courts will assign a legal aid attorney to represent him.” He adds that legal aid services are available “seven days a week, nights, weekends, and holidays, to defend individuals in criminal matters.”

### **Juvenile Rights:**

As in criminal matters, there is also “a right to counsel” in all legal matters regarding juvenile rights. Mr. Banks



elaborates: “We represent children in Family Court when they are the subject of an abuse or neglect case, or when young people are charged with misconduct in juvenile delinquency cases.”

Leah Stern\* is enthusiastic about the assistance Legal Aid rendered when she was unfortunately involved in a domestic abuse case. She explained that upon appearing in court to obtain an order of protection for herself and her children from her physically abusive husband, the judge inquired if she was in need of a lawyer. “The lawyer [assigned to me] was a young and very capable woman who understood my story immediately. She helped us from that first time in court, through every stage of our case.”

Leah expresses wonderment and gratitude for her lawyer’s dedication. “She was totally there for me. Every time I called her, she either answered my call or called back at the first opportunity. She directed me through the entire ordeal, and I didn’t have to pay for it.”



**Joel Schmidt,**  
Staff Attorney in the  
Queens office of the  
Criminal Practice

### **Civil Cases:**

“We also handle matters involving civil problems: housing, public benefits, disability, immigration, and employment,” says Banks. However, unlike criminal defense and family court, there is no right to counsel in civil matters. “We have to turn away 80 percent of our civil cases simply because of lack of resources,” he says. “Since all civil legal services are paid for through private donations, our hope is that additional resources can help us bridge that access-to-justice gap.”

### **Utilizing Legal Aid**

In the not-so-distant past, members of our community hesitated to utilize Legal Aid services, wrongfully thinking that private lawyers provide more effective legal representation. Recently, however, that trend seems to be reversing itself, as the community becomes aware of the tremendous professional advocacy provided by The Legal Aid Society. Says Attorney Banks: “Increasingly, we’ve been providing more representation to individuals in Boro Park, Williamsburg, and Crown Heights and that’s something that we take very seriously. When communities need us, we need to be there for communities.”

New Yorkers citywide are indeed fortunate that in times of need, there are lawyers with sterling reputations available to step in and provide legal assistance. The Legal Aid Society’s lawyers view their work not simply as a job, but as a vocation that provides unique opportunities to better the lives of others. As Joel Schmidt puts it, “I see criminal law as a higher calling; where the prevailing currency is the core constitutional concept of liberty and freedom; where an attorney is uniquely situated to help a client in a way no one else can. I’m fortunate to be at Legal Aid, where I get paid to pursue my passion while helping as many people as possible.”

\* Name has been changed.



## Misaskim Recognizes Years of Dedication by the **NYC Medical Examiner's Office**

Several changes have recently occurred at the NYC Medical Examiner's office. Dr. Charles Hirsch, who served as the Chief Medical Examiner, retired. So did Dr. Frede Frederic and Dr. Joaquin Gutierrez. Mr. Errington Albert Bailey, a dedicated staff member, passed away suddenly last month.

These significant transitions at the ME's office prompted Misaskim representatives to reflect on the many years of relationship building with ME staff members.

When Dr. Hirsch first took charge of the department nearly 30 years ago, he and his staff were always readily available to meet with the founders of Misaskim to learn about the needs of the Jewish community. They were eager to resolve any issue that surfaced, and demonstrated the utmost respect toward Jewish traditions related to death. Misaskim worked with the ME's office to institute a system whereby the Medical Examiner could open up an office in any of the five boroughs after working hours. This was done to accommodate Jewish families who wished to bury their loved ones as soon as possible, as mandated by halachah. The ME's office would assist in this process by ensuring that the necessary paperwork was promptly completed.

These and many more services are still in place today and are of great service, not only to Misaskim, but to every single kehillah in need. Today, Misaskim is confident that the stellar relationship between the NYC Medical Examiner's Office and the many faith-based communities will continue to flourish under the exemplary leadership of Dr. Barbara Sampson.

### **In Recognition:**



**Dr. Charles Hirsch,  
Chief Medical Examiner**

There hasn't been even one instance in which Dr. Hirsch displayed anything less than complete understanding of and sensitivity to the cultural practices of the Jewish community concerning death. We know that these sentiments are echoed by our friends in the Muslim and other faith-based communities.

The NYC Medical Examiner's Office has become a model for many other medical examiners across the nation in how to develop positive community relations. Even in other cities, Misaskim has been involved in many situations that led local officials to reach out to Dr. Hirsch for guidance.

Misaskim has been honored to work in conjunction with Dr. Charles Hirsch throughout his tenure. We wish him a meaningful and enjoyable retirement.

### **Dr. Frede Frederic**

Misaskim's relationship with Dr. Frederic began even before the organization was officially established. Dr. Frederic readily agreed to stay overtime to complete an autopsy when legally required, to ensure that it was completed as quickly as possible. In addition, she took extra care to be as minimally invasive as possible out of respect for Jewish traditions.

Misaskim has been honored to work in conjunction with Dr. Frederic throughout her tenure. We wish her a meaningful and enjoyable retirement.

### **Dr. Joaquin Gutierrez, Jr.**

Dr. Gutierrez worked alongside Misaskim for more than 20 years prior to his recent retirement. Misaskim representatives were always able to depend on his sensitivity that went above and beyond the call of duty. In many instances, Dr. Gutierrez worked with Jewish doctors familiar with *halachos* concerning *nivul hames* to

ensure the utmost respect.

Misaskim has been honored to work in conjunction with Dr. Gutierrez throughout his tenure. We wish him a meaningful and enjoyable retirement.

### **Mr. Errington Albert Bailey**

Misaskim representatives began interacting with Mr. Bailey in 1986 – many years before the organization was officially established. Mr. Bailey was a dear friend to Misaskim and to the community. He went above and beyond the call of duty to accommodate families who experienced a sudden and tragic loss. This included traveling back to his office after working hours on *Motzei Shabbos* or *Yom Tov* so that a *levaya* could be made on time.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of *niftarim* came to *kvura* in a timely manner due to the intervention of Mr. Bailey during his years of service.

Misaskim would like to extend its condolences to Mr. Bailey's family and to the entire staff at the Medical Examiner's office.



## Misaskim Presentation at NYC Medical Examiner's Office



Misaskim representatives were invited to the New York Medical Examiner's office to make a presentation that would enable Medical Examiner borough chiefs and their emergency planning staff to understand the Jewish traditions that are related to death.

The objective of this presentation was to explain the need for Misaskim's services and indicate how they are delivered to the Jewish community. The topics discussed included:

- How Misaskim assists families to ensure *kavod hameis*, should they have to deal with the Medical Examiner's office.
- How Misaskim handles a *meis mitzvah*, and the importance of addressing such a situation properly.
- How Misaskim operates as a support system for other *chevra kadishas*, should they need technical assistance
- How Misaskim's Disaster/Recovery

team operates, and how their actions prevent *nivul hameis*

- Misaskim's preparedness plans in the event of a large-scale disaster, R"L

Misaskim representatives stressed the organization's determination to adhere to legal requirements, while at the same time working to help families fulfill their religious obligations at the time of a death. Misaskim continues to enhance its 30-year working relationship with the ME's office in order to better serve the needs of both the Jewish community and the Medical Examiner's office. This relationship serves as a role model for medical examiners and coroners across the nation.

Assistant Commissioner for the Medical Examiner, Frank DePaolo, thanked Misaskim for the "excellent presentation." He said, "Our staff learned much about the Misaskim organization that will result in greatly improved relations going forward."



## Misaskim Holds Appreciation Event for the FDNY

A FDNY appreciation event was celebrated at Misaskim's headquarters to honor the brave men and women of the FDNY who rescued four *sifrei Torah* during a two-alarm fire that occurred at the Horodenka Shul in Flatbush on April 4. More than 70 firemen were called in on that day to battle the blaze at 1073 East 27th Street.

At the appreciation event, New York City Fire Commissioner Cassano, FDNY; Deputy Assistant Chief Brooklyn Borough Commander Leonard; Commanding Officer of Patrol Borough Brooklyn South Chief Thomas Chan; and Commanding Officer of the 70th Precinct Inspector Eric Rodriguez were all presented with awards for their dedication. Rabbi Ashkanazi, the Horodenka Rebbe, profusely thanked the officials for saving these precious Torah scrolls. Councilman David Greenfield and other local officials were there as well, to show their appreciation.

During the event, Misaskim displayed the partially burned *atzei chaim* of the *sifrei Torah* to demonstrate how close these scrolls were to being lost to the fire, R"L.



## Sefer Torah Dedications

### In Memory of Mr. William Solomon, a”h



Friends participate in the *Hachnasas Sefer Torah* commemorating Mr. William Solomon, a”h.

Misaskim welcomed a very special, new *sefer Torah* that is already being used by grieving families in our communities. This *sefer Torah* was donated in memory of Mr. William Solomon, a”h, who immigrated to the United States from Poland in 1914 with four older siblings. Mr. Solomon’s commitment to Judaism remained strong throughout his life.

Unfortunately, Mr. Solomon never married. Even though he was alone, he is fondly remembered by his family, friends, and members of the community as “an enormous bundle of warmth, love, fun, and humor. He loved people, and people loved him.”

On Sunday, his family and friends came to Misaskim to commemorate the memory of their dear friend. They participated in the *siyum kesivas osios* and a *seudas mitzvah*. They danced with the new *sefer Torah*, and remembered Mr. Solomon’s kind deeds.

Mr. Solomon spent most of his earnings supporting a variety of worthy Jewish *mosdos* and causes. After his death in 2009, his friends chose to donate part of his remaining estate to be used to write a *sefer Torah* that would find a permanent home at Misaskim as an eternal memorial for Zev ben Mordechai Solomon, a”h.

### In Memory of Rabbi Hershel Tuchman, a”h

Rabbi Hershel Tuchman, a”h, passed away two years ago on Rosh Chodesh Nisan. He dedicated his life to *chesed*, and assisted many of his fellow Yidden before, during and after the Holocaust. Rabbi Tuchman had written a *sefer Torah l’iluy nishmas* his parents.

Upon his *petirah*, Rabbi Tuchman’s children decided to honor their father in a similar way. During the week of *shiva*, after witnessing the *chesed* performed by Misaskim volunteers, they decided to donate their father’s *sefer Torah* to Misaskim. The family regards Misaskim as standing for the same ideals to which their father dedicated his life.



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