Wolf Administration Officials Remind Pennsylvanians to Have Fun and Stay Safe during Amusement Ride Safety Week

Governor Wolf Proclaims May 20-26 Amusement Ride Safety Week in Pennsylvania

Lancaster, PA – Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding today highlighted the importance of consumer safety at the kickoff event for Amusement Ride Safety Week. The event, held at Dutch Wonderland, aimed to educate Pennsylvania’s amusement park goers about the state’s efforts to keep them safe when riding amusement attractions.

“This industry is constantly evolving, and new technology and new thrills keep enthusiasts on their toes—but the thrill is gone if our rides aren’t safe,” said Sec. Redding. “Even on the best maintained ride, patrons must follow instructions and ride as directed. Everyone plays a role in keeping Pennsylvanians and our guests out of harm’s way, and keeping our parks safe, fun places to visit.”

Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Deputy Secretary Carrie Fischer Lepore joined today’s tour to highlight opportunities for fun and adventure in the state.

“With some of the most storied amusement parks in the country, including six over 100 years old, amusement parks are an iconic Pennsylvania tourism experience,” said Deputy Secretary Carrie Fischer Lepore. “As the unofficial start of summer is upon us, I encourage happy travelers of all ages to pack their bags, hit the road, and prepare to explore the commonwealth’s many attractions.”

Before touring the park, Bureau Director Walter Remmert highlighted elements of a ride safety inspection and offered safety tips for riders:

- Look for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania registration plate on rides and the public notice verifying a ride has been inspected according to Pennsylvania Amusement Ride Safety Act standards.
- Before getting in line for the ride, check and follow boarding restrictions, including those for medical concerns, height and weight.
- Listen carefully to all instructions. Operators are trained to keep riders safe.
- Make sure ride operators are alert. Never board a ride if the operator appears to be inattentive.
- Keep your arms, hands, feet and legs inside rides at all times. Always remain on a ride until it comes to a complete stop.
- Use shoulder harnesses, seat belts, lap bars or chains appropriately.
- Stop riding before you get tired. Tired riders are more likely to be injured than alert riders.
- Stay hydrated. Not drinking enough water can increase your risk of injury or illness.
- When riding with or assisting children, know their capabilities and take an active role in determining whether a ride is appropriate. Instruct your child on acceptable ride behavior...
before boarding. Always supervise your child on a ride. Ask the operator to stop the ride if you see that your child is crying or shows any other signs of distress.

During the event, guests viewed a mock inspection and had a first look at Dutch Wonderland’s new roller coaster, Merlin’s Mayhem. General Manager Laura Charles also took the stage to thank guests for their commitment to safety and consumer education.

“We are honored to host Secretary Redding and the Bureau of Ride and Measurement Standards for this official kick-off to the summer amusement park season,” Charles said. “We share their commitment to safety as our absolute top priority at Dutch Wonderland, and ensuring our guests feel safe and well cared for is an integral part of delivering the family-friendly atmosphere that’s central to our mission.”

The Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Ride and Measurement Standards registers more than 9,300 amusement rides and attractions – more than any other state or foreign country – and certifies and trains nearly 1,600 professional private industry inspectors across the state. Regulated rides include not only roller coasters, Ferris wheels and carousels, but also wave pools, water slides, inflatables, ropes courses, climbing walls, zip lines, trampoline parks and other facilities.

Last year, more than 11 million visitors took an estimated 55 million rides at Pennsylvania’s parks. More than 5.2 million visitors attended the state’s 109 fairs and millions more rode rides and attractions at carnivals.

The department has inspected and registered amusement rides under the Amusement Ride Safety Act since 1984. It regularly participates in education and outreach seminars that include classes and hands-on demonstrations for ride operators and inspectors.

Find information about amusement ride and attractions inspections, and search PDA’s online inspection database at RideSafe.pa.gov.

Text of Governor Wolf’s proclamation follows.

PROCLAMATION

Amusement Ride Safety Week
May 20-26, 2018

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is home to more than 10,000 amusement rides and attractions that provide entertainment to millions of visitors at the commonwealth’s county and community fairs, carnivals, and amusement parks, totaling more than any other state or foreign country; and

WHEREAS, to ensure the mechanical and physical safety of amusement rides and their safe enjoyment by all ride patrons, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Ride and Measurement Standards administers the state’s amusement ride safety program and is a national leader in ride inspection and safety; and

WHEREAS, the department works cooperatively with the amusement ride industry, certifying and training nearly 1,300 professional private industry inspectors to ensure that every ride in
Pennsylvania is inspected and registered under the Amusement Ride Safety Act of 1984. For quality assurance, an additional staff of inspectors is employed by the state; and

WHEREAS, the commonwealth is committed to amusement ride inspector training and regularly leads and participates in national safety education and outreach programs, which include workshops and hands-on demonstrations; and

WHEREAS, consumers also play a role in ensuring their own safety while riding amusement attractions. Amusements are best enjoyed as intended, without the addition of rider-added thrills.

THEREFORE, in recognition of the cooperative roles of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, the amusement ride industry, and ride patrons in keeping amusement attractions safe for all to enjoy, I, Tom Wolf, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim May 20-26, 2018, as AMUSEMENT RIDE SAFETY WEEK in Pennsylvania.

GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the City of Harrisburg, this twentieth day of May two thousand eighteen, the year of the commonwealth the two hundred forty-second.

TOM WOLF
Governor

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