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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LEWISTON, IDAHO –As we prepare to venture outdoors for camping, boating, baseball and other fun outdoor activities this Memorial Day weekend, Public Health – Idaho North Central District wants to remind you to think about sun safety. Many people develop their first sunburns of the year during this weekend. The more sunburns a person experiences, the more likely they are to develop skin cancer. That's why The National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention has designated the Friday before Memorial Day as *National Don't Fry Day* to remind everyone to practice sun-safe behaviors.

Whether from the sun or an artificial source such as tanning beds, ultraviolet (UV) radiation is proven to cause cancer. In fact, each year in the U.S., there are more new cases of skin cancer than new cases of breast, prostate, lung and colon cancer COMBINED. One in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer at some point in their lives. As the rates of many types of cancer are decreasing, skin cancer rates continue to climb. In Idaho, the number of cases of melanoma, the most dangerous form of skin cancer, has more than tripled over the last 30 years.

Fortunately, you can continue to work, exercise and enjoy the outdoors while practicing sun safety at the same time. Here are some ways to do this:

- As much as possible, avoid the sun between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. when the sun's rays are the strongest.
- Seek or create shade. Practice the shadow rule – If your shadow is shorter than you, seek shade.
- Wear sun protective clothing, including a wide brim hat, long-sleeve shirt, long pants, and sunglasses. If you choose to wear a baseball cap remember to protect your ears and neck with sunscreen.
- Apply sunscreen and lip balm with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher at least 20 minutes before you go outside. Reapply every two hours and use it on cloudy days and all year round. Sunscreen is not recommended for babies in the first six months of life.
- Use extra caution near water, snow, concrete, and glass. These can make the sun's rays stronger and more harmful.
- Avoid intentional tanning. Ultraviolet light from the sun and tanning beds causes skin cancer and wrinkling. Tanned skin is damaged skin.

Your skin has to last a lifetime, so now is the time to start protecting it.

The National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention includes the American Cancer Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) among others. To learn more about the National Council visit www.skincancerprevention.org. For more information about local efforts to address skin cancer and sun safety visit www.idahopublichealth.com or call 208-799-3100.