

O'CONNOR LAW

FALL 2021 NEWSLETTER

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Back to School and Work for the Fall

As the summer ends and the fall season begins, schools will start to open for the new school year and employees will return to their normal work routines. As people are transitioning back to their daily schedules, it is important to be organized. Listed below are tips in order to be safe and prepared to return to school and work.

1. Create an organization schedule. For some people, it is beneficial to plan their day in order to maintain their focus and priorities. Having a planner or calendar would be helpful for people who have busy schedules.
2. Practice safe and healthy routines. This includes washing hands regularly, sleeping at least eight hours, and eating healthy meals.
3. Prepare for the days or week ahead. Deciding to plan early for the future allows people to maintain their schedule and allow for additional time for other activities, such as meeting with friends.

School Bus Safety

With schools opening for the new academic year, school buses will be very common on the roads. In fact, school buses are one of the safest vehicles today. It will become ordinary to see school buses driving and stopping to pick up passengers, especially when employees are driving on their way to work during the morning commute. Read the following recommendations to ensure that you and your family are aware of school bus safety.

When preparing to ride on a school bus, always be cautious. Since school buses are long and wide, drivers do have multiple blind spots. One important blind spot would be behind the vehicle. Do not stop or pause directly behind a school bus because the driver will not be able to see people, or small cars, in the blind spot. This is also important to remember when driving near or behind a school bus. Make sure to allow an appropriate distance from buses to prepare for sudden or unexpected stops.

When near a school bus, there are certain laws and regulations to ensure the safety of the bus and its passengers, as well as other drivers on the road. For example, it is illegal to pass a school bus when it is loading or unloading passengers. When driving early in the morning or to work, look for children walking to the bus stop or for school buses preparing to stop. When approaching a school bus stop, buses will alert drivers to stop at a safe distance by dropping a cross arm and providing flashing lights.

Recipe Corner

Patti's Recipe for

Slow-Cooker Chicken Soup

Ingredients

- 1 pound boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 ½ cups frozen corn kernels
- 15 ounces black beans 1 can, rinsed and drained
- ½ cup finely diced onion
- 1 red bell pepper cored seeded and finely diced
- 14 ½ ounces diced tomatoes
- 10 ounces red enchilada sauce
- 2 cups chicken broth

Instructions

1. Place the chicken breasts at the bottom of a slow cooker.
2. Sprinkle the chili powder, cumin, salt, pepper and garlic powder over the chicken breasts.
3. Add the corn, black beans, onion and bell pepper to the slow cooker.
4. Pour in the tomatoes, enchilada sauce, and chicken broth.
5. Cover the slow cooker and cook on LOW for 6-8 hours or HIGH for 4 hours.
6. Remove the top and shred the chicken breasts with two forks.
7. Ladle into bowls and serve with



A Sponsor for the Frackville Area Fireworks Display

O'Connor Law donated to the Frackville Area Fireworks Committee for their annual fireworks display. The Committee plans and coordinates an annual fireworks display that occurs in Frackville every year. This year, the display occurred on July 3 in observance of Independence Day. In 2012, representatives from communities in and surrounding the Frackville area decided to create and implement the Frackville Area Fireworks Committee to restore the annual fireworks display. Nine years later, the Committee continues to plan their annual fireworks display and bring entertainment to the local community. With the help of local and community sponsors, the Frackville Area Fireworks Committee plans to continue the annual fireworks display for many years to come.

Local Attorney and Baker

Attorney Steven Yurkonis specializes in many practice areas, including Social Security Disability and Workers' Compensation, and represents clients in Pennsylvania and New York. When not in the courtroom, Attorney Yurkonis also works at the Spring Street Bakery, located in Frackville, Pennsylvania. In 2019, Attorney Yurkonis and his family bought the bakery on Spring Street. Since then, he has been a pastry chef and cooks donuts on the weekends at the bakery.

Spring Street Bakery is an old-school style bakery known for their desserts, sweets, and breads made from scratch every morning with no chemicals, preservatives, or mixes. Over the years, the bakery has been able to expand their availability by offering a variety of donuts, cookies, cupcakes, sticky buns, and cinnamon rolls. They also provide a variety of breads, including rye, honey wheat, multi-grain, and French and Italian bread.

The bakery also gives back to the community as much as possible, such as donating baked goods to charities and fundraisers. Since their opening, they have donated over 1000 loaves of bread to food shelters.



Attorney Mary Kathleen O'Connor presenting a check to Zachary Chernewski, a member of the Frackville Area Fireworks Committee.

National Hispanic Heritage Month

National Hispanic Heritage Month is observed every year from September 15 to October 15. During this period of time, the United States recognizes and celebrates the history, cultures, contributions, and influences of Hispanic and Latino Americans in the country.

National Hispanic Heritage Month first started as Hispanic Heritage Week in 1968, as issued by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Twenty years later, President Ronald Reagan extended the observance to span from September 15 to October 15, which is still enacted today. In fact, September 15 celebrates the date of independence for Guatemala, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras. Multiple holidays also occur during this time period, including the independence days of Chile and Mexico.

Since being recognized in 1968, National Hispanic Heritage Month continues to be recognized and honored every year.

Recall on Multiple Philips Respironics Machines

Recently, multiple Philips Respironics machines have been recalled, including CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure), BiPAP (bilevel positive airway pressure), and ventilator machines. The devices were meant to help users with their breathing and airway passages while sleeping in order to keep their airway open. Instead of benefiting users, many have reported that they developed mild to severe symptoms from using this machine.

The recall is due to a component called a polyester-based polyurethane (PE-PUR) foam. The foam has the potential to cause severe health conditions if it becomes degraded into small pieces or a contaminated vapor. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has issued warnings to alert users of the machines and the hazards of the PE-PUR foam.

If you or someone you know has been using a machine by Philips Respironics that could potentially be recalled, it is recommended to contact a medical professional. They will be able to advise the next steps that would be the best for your health. To read more information about the recall on Philips Respironics devices, read our blog, "Recall on Philips Respironics Machines", on our website, OConnorLaw.com.

Time to Prepare for Winter

With the winter season coming within the next few months, it is important to begin preparations for the cold weather. There are many ways to ensure that you and your family are safe and protected during the winter months.

1. Check and maintain heating systems and sources regularly.
2. Install and inspect smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
3. Have winter equipment ready, such as snow shovels, snow brushes, and ice scrapers.
4. Inspect tread on tires or add snow tires to vehicles.
5. Service cars and ensure that they are prepared for the winter weather.
6. Prepare an emergency winter weather kit to store in homes and vehicles, including first aid kits, flashlights with extra batteries, food, water, and blankets.
7. Be safe outdoors by wearing appropriate clothes for the weather, such as gloves, scarves, winter jackets, boots, and hats.

Product Liability and Mass Torts

There are new reports of mass tort litigation cases that arise every day, including product liabilities. Mass tort litigation cases are created when many people have experienced harmful impacts of a product that result in many lawsuits. Examples of dangerous drugs and products that have caused multiple lawsuits include 3M earplugs, Accutane, Elmiron, hernia mesh devices, Paragard, Paraquat (Gramoxone), and certain types of hip and knee replacements.

If you or someone you know has received injuries as a result of a dangerous drug or product, it is recommended to contact a product liability attorney.

On our website, we provide more information and examples regarding mass tort litigations, product liability, and dangerous drugs and products: <https://www.oconnorlaw.com/dangerous-drugs.html>.

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