



# NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Glendale Fire Department

6829 North 58th Drive / Glendale, Arizona 85301

623-930-4400



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CONTACT: Capt. Michael Young, PIO, 623-986-0148

## **GLENDALE FIRE WARNS PUBLIC OF INCREASED BEE ACTIVITY AS TEMPERATURES CONTINUE TO RISE**

**Glendale, Ariz.** — As temperatures rise, so does bee activity, and that is why Glendale Firefighters want everyone to "bee" on the lookout.

The Glendale Fire Department responds to dozens of bee related calls every year, including one call last year to the Mayor's house.

On April 24, 2016, City of Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers was doing yard work when bees swarmed him. He ran for safety inside his garage while the bees pursued and continued stinging him. Inside the house, Mayor Weiers' wife, Sandy, extracted more than 20 stingers.

Mayor Weiers fully recovered from his run in with the swarm of bees but others are not so lucky after being stung.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, over 100 people die every year from bee or wasp stings. Most deaths can be attributed to an anaphylactic reaction.

Anaphylaxis, which can be life-threatening, is when your immune system overreacts after it mistakes an allergen for a foreign substance. A type of white blood cells, known as Mast Cells, explode and overproduce chemicals like histamine within the body. This overproduction causes rashes and itching, inflamed airways and difficulty breathing, upset stomach and a decrease in blood pressure, which will lead to dizziness and even a loss of consciousness.

Following these safety tips may prevent a trip to the hospital or calling 911:

- Keep pets and children indoors when using weed eaters, hedge clippers, lawn mowers, chain saws, etc. Bee attacks happen frequently when a person is mowing the lawn or pruning shrubs and inadvertently strikes a nest.
- If you encounter a swarm, run as quickly as you can in a straight line away from the bees. Get indoors as soon as possible. If you aren't near a building, get inside the nearest car or shed. Close the doors and windows to keep the bees from following you.
- Because bees target the head and eyes, cover your head as much as you can without slowing your escape.
- Avoid excessive motion when near a colony. Bees are much more likely to respond to an object on the move.
- Don't jump into a pool or other body of water to avoid the bees. They can and will wait for you to surface, and will sting you as soon as you do. You can't hold your breath long enough to wait them out, trust me.
- If someone else is being stung by bees and cannot run away, cover them with anything you can find. Do what you can to quickly cover any exposed skin or susceptible areas of their body, and then run for help as fast as you can.
- Once you are in a safe place, use a blunt object to scrape any stingers out of your skin.
- If you were stung just once or a few times, treat the stings as you would regular bee stings and carefully monitor yourself for any unusual reactions. Wash the affected sites with soap and water to avoid infections. Use ice packs to reduce swelling and pain. Of course, if you are allergic to bee venom, seek medical attention immediately.
- If you suffered multiple stings, seek medical attention immediately.

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