

## SAFETY TIPS FOR ADULTS



Fire Prevention Week 2009 focuses on ways to keep homes fire safe and prevent painful burns. By following simple safety rules, you can “Stay Fire Smart!”

### Don't Get Burned

- Keep hot foods and liquids away from tables and counter edges so they cannot be pulled or knocked over.
- Have a 3-foot “kid-free” zone around the stove.
- Never hold a child in your arms while preparing hot food or drinking a hot beverage.
- Teach children that hot things hurt.
- Be careful when using things that get hot such as curling irons, oven, irons, lamps, heaters.
- When using heating pads only use for 15-20 minutes at a time and don't lie, sit or place anything on the pad.

### Just Right?

- To avoid scalds, set the thermostat setting in your water heater to no higher than 120 degrees F.
- Remember young children and older adults skin burns more easily.
- Consider having “anti-scald” devices on tub faucets and shower heads to prevent scalds.
- Test the water before placing a child or yourself in the tub.
- Never leave young children alone in the tub, shower or near a sink.
- Be careful about scalding water. The water should feel warm, not hot. Before you put your child in the tub, test the temperature with your wrist, elbow, or the back of your hand. Don't rely on a tub with a temperature indicator, such as a drain plug that changes color to indicate too hot, too cold, and just right. If you're using a thermometer with a read-out, infant bath water should be no more than 100 degrees. Even when using a thermometer use your wrist, elbow, or the back of your hand as your main guide.

### Cool a Burn

- Treat a burn right away. Put it in cool water for three to five minutes. Cover with a clean, dry cloth.
- If the burn is bigger than your fist or if you have any questions, get medical help right away.
- Remove all clothing, diapers, jewelry and metal from the burned areas.

### Cooking with Caution

- The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking.
- Pay attention to what you are cooking. Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food.
- When you are simmering, boiling, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly, stay in the home, and use a timer to remind you.
- If you must leave the room even for a short time, turn off the stove.
- If you have young children, use the stove's back burners whenever possible.
- Keep children and pets at least 3 feet away from the stove.
- When you cook, wear clothing with tight-fitting or short sleeves.
- Allow food cooked in a microwave oven to cool for a few minutes before you take it out.
- Open microwaved food slowly. Hot steam from the container can cause burns.

## **The Heat is On...**

- Have a 3 foot kid-free zone around open fires and heaters.
- Use a fireplace screen to keep sparks inside the fireplace.
- Turn portable space heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.
- Keep things that can burn, such as paper, bedding, or furniture, at least 3 feet from heaters.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected each year by a professional.
- Make sure your portable space heater has an auto shut-off so if it is tipped over, it will shut off.
- Have your chimneys cleaned and inspected before each heating season.

## **Take it Outside**

- Ask smokers to smoke outside.
- Give smokers deep, sturdy ashtrays.
- Never smoke if you are tired, have taken medicine, drugs, or alcohol that makes you sleepy.
- Keep smoking materials away from things that can burn, like bedding, furniture, and clothing.

## **Stay Grounded**

- Keep lamps, light fixtures, and light bulbs away from anything that can burn, such as lamp shades, bedding, curtains, and clothing.
- Replace cracked and damaged electrical cords.
- Use extension cords for temporary wiring only. Consider having additional circuits or receptacles added by a qualified electrician.
- If you have young children in your home have tamper-resistant electrical receptacles.
- Call a qualified electrician or landlord if you have recurring problems with blowing fuses or tripping circuit breakers, discolored or warm wall outlets, flickering lights or a burning or rubbery smell coming from an appliance.

## **Neighborhood Watch**

- With the economic downturn, it is important to keep a watchful eye on your neighborhood. Encourage your community to implement an anti-arson program.
- Keep trash from collecting on your property.
- Remove abandoned vehicles from your property.
- Remove dead branches that could be used as a fuel source.

## **Fire-Safety Basics**

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.
- For best protection use both photoelectric and ionization technology. You can use individual ionization and photoelectric smoke alarms or combination units that contain both technologies in the same unit.
- Test smoke alarms at least once a month using the test button.
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years.
- Make sure everyone can hear the sound of the smoke alarms.
- Have a home fire escape plan. Know at least two ways out of every room, if possible, and a meeting place outside. Practice your escape plan twice a year.
- When the smoke alarm sounds, get out and stay out.
- If you are building or remodeling your home, consider a home fire sprinkler system.