

The Wellness Exchange

A Publication of



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Solutions for a Healthier WorkplaceSM

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National Home Safety Month



Most Americans would probably say they feel

safest in their own homes. However, more than 20 million medical visits each year are caused by unintentional injuries in the home. Read on to learn about common household dangers and how to stay safe at home.

Poison Safety

Poisoning is the 2nd leading cause of unintentional home injury-related deaths in America. Still, over 50% of families leave chemicals unlocked, and over 80% leave medicines unsecured.

Here are some tips for keeping your family safe from poisoning:

- ~ Keep all potentially dangerous products, including household cleaners, medicines, antifreeze, and pesticides, locked up and stored out of reach of children.
- ~ If you have young children at home, install child locks on all cabinets.
- ~ Store food separately from non-food products in case a leak occurs, which may contaminate food.
- ~ Dispose of expired medications by flushing them down the toilet.
- ~ Mop up antifreeze and car oil spills immediately. They are extremely harmful to children and pets.
- ~ Read "Use and Storage" directions before using household products.
- ~ Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions when using harsh chemicals or cleaners.
- ~ Do not mix household products.
- ~ Install a carbon monoxide detector near sleeping areas in the home.
- ~ Post the national poison control hotline (1.800.222.1222) next to every phone.

Home Water Safety

Water can be a danger both inside and outside the home. To protect your children from potential water hazards:

- ~ Always stay nearby when your children are around standing water, including buckets, bathtubs, toilets and spas.
- ~ Always supervise young children during bath time. Older siblings should not be in charge of supervising younger siblings around standing water. In addition, remember that baby bath seats should never substitute for adult supervision.
- ~ Never leave standing water in a bathtub.
- ~ Keep bathroom doors closed.
- ~ Use toilet seat locks and keep toilet lids shut.
- ~ Empty all buckets immediately after using them, and store all buckets upside down and out of children's reach.

Fire Safety

Home fires are the 3rd leading cause of unintentional home injury-related deaths. The majority of Americans have smoke alarms installed in their homes, but only 20% actually test the smoke alarms on a regular basis. In addition, 64% of American families have never planned or practiced a fire escape plan. What can you do?

1. Install and test smoke alarms

- ~ Install smoke alarms on each level of your home, including the basement, and in or near all sleeping areas.
- ~ Test smoke alarms at least once a month and replace batteries at least once a year.
- ~ Never disable smoke alarms; even temporarily – you may forget to replace the battery.
- ~ Remember to replace all smoke alarms at least once every ten years.

2. Create a fire escape plan.

- ~ Memorize the fire department's telephone number.
- ~ Investigate all possible exits and escape routes, checking for potential obstacles and identifying any need for ladders.
- ~ Practice your plan with the entire family at least twice a year, preferably once during the day and once at night to ensure that everyone is prepared.
- ~ Select a post-escape meeting location a safe distance from your home.
- ~ Use a "Buddy System," and make sure someone is assigned to help anyone with special needs in the event of a real emergency.
- ~ Once you are out of the house, stay out. Under no circumstances should anyone re-enter a burning building.



covers in electrical outlets and anti-scald devices on faucets.

Falls

- Falls are another cause of injury in the home (more than 5 million every year!). Consider taking the following steps to reduce your risk:
- ~ Keep all porches, hallways and stairwells well lit.
 - ~ Use a non-slip mat in bathtubs and showers.
 - ~ Install grab bars in bath and shower stalls.
 - ~ Install window guards to stop children from falling out of windows.
 - ~ Use a sturdy step stool with hand rails when climbing is necessary.

Visit www.homesafetycouncil.org for more information!



Outdoor Summer Safety

For more information call 1-800-765-3277 or visit www.bhsonline.com



Summer is the season for families to relax and enjoy activities such as barbecues, pool parties, and other backyard gatherings. However, there are certain risks associated with these activities. Take the following steps to ensure your safety as well as your family's this summer.

Grilling Safety

Grills can pose a serious fire hazard. To ensure safety, keep the following suggestions in mind when grilling:

- ~ **Keep children and pets away** from the grill area until it is completely cool.
- ~ **Keep the grill at least 3 feet away from other objects** when in use, including the house and any shrubs or bushes.
- ~ **Make sure there are no overhanging trees or branches** near the grill.
- ~ **Check the connection between the propane tank and fuel line** before each use to make sure there is no leak. If you do find a leak, turn off the gas immediately and don't try to light the grill again until the leak is fixed.



- ~ Bringing a barbecue grill inside (or into any unventilated space) poses both a **fire hazard** and a **carbon monoxide poisoning hazard**.

If you or someone else is burned by the grill:

- ~ **Put out flames**, or remove the individual from the source of the burn (i.e the grill)
- ~ **Cool the burned area** with large amounts of cool water. Do not use ice or ice water unless the burn is a small surface burn.
- ~ **Apply towels, sheets or other cloths** soaked in cool water to the face or other areas that cannot be immersed. Continuously add more water to keep the cloth cool.
- ~ **Cover the burn** with dry, sterile dressings or cloth.
- ~ **Call 911 if:**
 - ~The burn causes the victim to have difficulty breathing.
 - ~The burn covers more than one body part.
 - ~The burn is to the head, neck, hands, feet, or genitals.
 - ~The burn victim is a child or elderly person (unless the burn is very minor).
 - ~The burn resulted from chemicals, explosions, or electricity.

Backyard Safety

Lawn mowing and landscaping are chores that are completed frequently during the summer. Be careful; yard work can cause serious injuries. Take the following precautions to ensure that you are safe in your backyard:

- ~ **Wear protective goggles and ear plugs** when using heavy and/or loud machinery in your backyard.

~ **Store garden tools** out of childrens' reach, with tines, blades or spikes pointing downward.

~ **Store gasoline** outside of the home (in a detached shed or garage) in tightly sealed safety containers out of the sight and reach of children.

~ **Wait until the motor is completely cooled** down before adding fuel to any machinery.

~ **Start the lawnmower outside**, rather than in the home or garage.

~ **Store pesticides in the original containers** and out of the reach of children. Don't use the same containers for eating and drinking.

~ **Keep sidewalks and pathways clear** of toys and clutter.

~ **Put down 9 inches of shock-absorbing materials**, such as wood chips, mulch or shredded rubber, around all play areas.



Pool Safety

Drowning is the 5th leading cause of unintentional injury, and related deaths. Drowning is silent and sudden, and many drownings occur in home swimming pools.

To keep your pool area safe:

~ **Learn to swim.**

~ **Learn CPR**, and insist that others who care for your child do the same.

~ **Post CPR instructions** near the pool.

~ **Provide constant supervision** to all children in the pool. Do not allow older kids to be responsible for younger children in the pool.

~ **Never swim alone** (even adults).

~ **Install fencing** around the pool that is at least 5 feet high, with self-locking and self-closing gates.

~ **Always keep basic lifesaving equipment by the pool**, including a pole, rope, and personal flotation devices (PFDs). Be sure you know how to use the equipment.

~ **Keep the pool deck and sidewalk free of clutter** to prevent falls.

~ **Keep a cordless, water-resistant telephone** close to the pool area, and make sure emergency numbers are posted nearby.

~ **Remove the pool cover completely** before using the pool.



For more information on keeping yourself and your family safe this summer, visit: www.homesafetycouncil.org www.redcross.org