

SPRING INTO SUMMER

Traditionally, the warmer temperatures of the spring and summer seasons motivate people to clean up their homes, both indoors and outdoors. It is also a good time to think about keeping our families safe from fires and other hazards. Yard clean-up, basement organization, and even fun outdoor activities can involve products and behaviors associated with safety concerns. In this issue of "Safety Lines", we present a number of tips to keep you and your family safe. Enjoy the beauty of spring and summer as you safely revitalize your home!

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YARD CLEAN UP

If you didn't tackle the project before winter arrived, rake the dried leaves that fell among the shrubbery of your home.

Remove the dried branches from bushes and plants such as fall mums to give the new blooms room to grow.

Contact your local fire company to find out the rules for disposal of your yard waste. If your municipality allows you to burn waste, follow their instructions carefully.

- Only burn dried yard waste when there is no wind.
- Keep a hose nearby with the water turned on.
- Keep a rake handy to collect stray leaves and return them to the pile.
- Burn away from trees, shrubbery and buildings.
- Never leave burning materials unattended!



FIRE PITS

People have always been drawn to the sensory experience of gathering around a fire in the outdoors. While “fire pits” provide warmth, a visual light show and the soothing crackling of the flames, we must follow very careful safety tips when using fire pits, chimineas, outdoor fire places, or any other similar fire device.

- Never leave an outdoor fire pit unattended.
- Always follow manufacturers instructions regarding types of fuel to be used in the fire pit.
- Always be prepared to extinguish the fire, whether it be with a water or sand bucket, or a fire extinguisher.
- Always use the mesh screen provided with most fire pits.
- Put the fire out, completely, before leaving it for the night.
- Use safety gloves.



BASEMENT AND GARAGE CLEAN-UP

This is never a fun job, but somebody has to do it! Take into consideration the following tips to keep your family safe:

- Oily rags stored together on a pile or in a bag can cause a fire without you even being there! Spontaneous combustion can occur, and the rags can burst into flames. Throw away rags when you are finished using them, and use a new rag each time.
- Dispose of empty paint cans and aerosol cans. Do not throw them in with your regular trash without first contacting your local municipality for instructions.
- Dispose of unnecessary papers and boxes. Leave an uncluttered path to the entrance and to heat sources.
- Make sure a working smoke alarm is installed in your basement.



LAWN MOWERS AND WEED TRIMMERS

When fueling your lawn mower or weed trimmers, never smoke or light a cigarette. Use only the recommended fuel and always refuel outdoors. Cool the engine before refueling. Keep children and pets away from the area.

Always store fuel in an appropriate, clearly labeled container. Standard containers are color-coded as follows:

- Gasoline: Red
- Kerosene: Blue
- Diesel: Yellow



SUMMER FUN AWAY FROM HOME:

CAMPING

Camping can be a fun and inexpensive way to enjoy summer family time. By following a few simple tips, you can keep your family safe in the great outdoors!

- When building a campfire, always try to use a designated fire pit.
- Clear the ground around the site; about ten feet is a good rule of thumb.
- Build your fire downwind. Almost ANY campfire can be dangerous in a stiff breeze. Poorly managed campfires are a frequent source of forest fires!
- To avoid dangerous flare-ups, NEVER use flammable liquids such as gasoline to ignite or strengthen a campfire.
- Never leave a campfire unattended, and always keep a fire extinguisher or water nearby.
- When you are finished with the fire, douse the flames and coals completely with water.
- If you are camping in a tent, never use candles, lanterns, or other sources of open flame inside of the tent.
- Before going to sleep, check once again to make sure any open campfire has been completely extinguished.



VACATIONS & TRAVEL

When staying in a hotel or motel during summer vacation, take the following precautions to keep your family safe:

- Pack a flashlight and portable smoke alarm.
- Identify all exits and escape routes.
- Count the number of doors from your room to the exit(s) in case of a fire:
- Get low and go!
- Feel the door with the back of your hand, and don't open it if it is hot to the touch!
- Take your door key with you.
- Stay low and use stairs to escape.
- If trapped, block smoke from doors and vents with wet towels and signal for help.

KIDS CORNER

“FIREFIGHTER SIMON SAYS”

Children are great at learning things when their bodies are engaged and are less likely to be afraid of information given to them in the course of a game (or something else that’s enjoyable), so incorporate fire safety into a game of Firefighter Simon Says!



FIREFIGHTER SIMON SAYS:

- Crawl with your belly to the floor to avoid the smoke in the air above you.
- Touch a door with the back of your hand to detect heat - if it’s cool, open the door carefully; if it’s hot, leave it alone.
- Stop, drop, and roll if fire touches you
- Go to the outside meeting spot
- Whatever else is developmentally appropriate for your child

FIREFIGHTER SIMON DID NOT SAY:

- Go back for your favorite toy
- Hide from the fire
- Touch or go near the fire
- Any other concerns you may have about your child’s reaction to a fire




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