

# Fire and Life Safety Bulletin

September 2009



## *Fires Are Down Which Is Good, But .....There Is Still Bad News!*

In reviewing statistics for the first six months of this year, I am glad to report that structural fires are down 25% compared to last year. That good news is dampened by the fact that fire injuries have increased by 36%. It appears that cooking fires (the leading cause of fires) are the cause of these injuries. Further investigation shows that most of the injuries occurred while the individual was taking inappropriate steps to extinguish the cooking fire. Let's take a look at the *right* things to do if you are faced with a kitchen fire:

- In all cases, make sure everyone evacuates the house.
- Call **911** to report the fire. We will respond quickly and take care of the situation for you.
- If you want to attempt to extinguish the fire, it should be a small fire.
- The simplest way to extinguish a pan fire is to place a top or cookie sheet over the pan.
- Using a fire extinguisher, make sure you keep the door at your back to make a quick escape if necessary.
- Once you have the fire extinguished, don't forget to turn off the burner.
- If you can not control the fire right away, **Get out and call the fire department!**
- **NEVER, never put water on a grease fire!** It will splatter the grease and you can easily get burned.
- **NEVER try to carry a flaming grease fire outside!** You are at great risk of spilling hot grease on you and others while spreading fire throughout the house.

**Please**, help protect you and your loved ones by doing all you can to reduce the number of fire injuries. Practice good fire prevention techniques and take appropriate safe actions if faced with a fire situation.

Fire Marshal David Creasy

### Prevent Scald Burns in the Kitchen

- Wear long oven mitts to protect your skin when cooking or handling hot food.
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove so children cannot pull them down.
- Keep children away from the stove when you are cooking.
- Food cooked in a microwave can get very hot quickly. Use oven mitts when taking the lid off.

### Prevent Scald Burns in the Bathroom

- Set your water heater at 120 degrees F.
- Use a thermometer to check the water coming out of the tap.
- Prior to letting children get in the tub, run your hand through the water.
- Install special tub spouts and shower heads that automatically shut off when sensing water hot enough to cause a burn.

OCTOBER 4-10, 2009

# STAY FIRE SMART!

# DON'T GET BURNED

[www.firepreventionweek.org](http://www.firepreventionweek.org)


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# GET READY FOR HURRICANES!

**Hurricane Watch**— 74 mph winds possible within 36 hours

**Hurricane Warning**— 74 mph winds expected within 24 hours.

Forecasters say there is a chance of severe storms or hurricanes this year. Over the last few years, mother nature has shown us that we are vulnerable to her fury. It is best to be prepared for any storm. Early planning can help you stay safe in storm-prone areas. Before a storm strikes:

- Stock up on nonperishable food, medicine, baby supplies and pet food.
- Keep a three-day water supply of about one gallon per person per day.
- Check your emergency equipment such as flashlights, radios, generators and batteries.
- Keep extra cash available in case of wide spread and long term power failures.
- Arrange safe sheltering for your pet if you must evacuate, as some shelters do not accept pets.



## CAMPUS FIRE SAFETY MONTH

Every year college and university students experience a growing number of fire-related emergencies. There

are several causes for these fires, however most are due to a general lack of knowledge about fire safety and prevention. To combat these causes, September has been designated as *Campus Fire Safety Month*. In cases where fire fatalities occurred on college campuses, alcohol was a factor. There is a strong link between alcohol and fire deaths. In more than 50% of adult fire fatalities, victims were under the influence at the time of the fire. Alcohol abuse often impairs judgment and hampers evacuation efforts. Cooking is the leading cause of fire injuries on college campuses, closely followed by careless smoking and arson.

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) offers these tips to help reduce and prevent the loss of life and property in dormitory and university housing fires:

- Extinguish all candles when leaving the room or going to sleep.
- Do not use the inside of the oven for storage purposes.
- Never leave cooking unattended!
- If you must smoke, do not smoke when you are going to bed or under the influence of alcohol.
- React right away when you hear a smoke alarm sounding.
- Know your exits... in the dorms, in a friends apartment, or in popular hang-outs. It is critical for you to notice more than one escape route in any building you visit.
- Never use an elevator during a fire! Use the stairs.
- After a party, check furniture, cushions, and mulch for smoldering cigarette butts.

J. Sargeant Reynolds  
Community College



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Simply designating this month as *Campus Fire Safety Month* is not enough. Members of the Richmond Fire Department will be visiting area colleges stressing fire safety. Join our efforts by passing this information on to friends and loved ones that are college bound. You can never stress enough safety.



The Richmond Fire Department stands ready to assist you in many ways other than emergency situations. Most importantly, we will provide you and your family with a free smoke alarm; including installation. If you just need a battery or want us to check the condition of your present smoke alarm, we will provide that service for free as well. Also, we will be happy to conduct a free home safety survey....with no strings attached. We are concerned with your safety and that of your family.

**Help us by being proactive; call the Metro Smoke Detector Hotline at 1-888-537-5967 for any of these free services. Lives depend on it.**

