



Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Burn Awareness Week is February 3-9

The Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control reminds parents and caregivers that fire is just one cause of burn injuries

National Burn Awareness Week is February 3-9. The Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control joins fire and life safety educators across the state in reminding parents and caregivers that fire is just one cause of burn injuries. Children also can be seriously injured by hot foods and beverages, heating appliances, hot pots and pans, electrical currents and chemicals.

This year's focus of Burn Awareness Week is preventing scald burn injuries.

Hot water scalds are the leading cause of burns to young children and can be caused by hot liquids or steam. Hot tap water accounts for almost 1 in 4 of all scald burns among children and is associated with more deaths and hospitalizations than any other hot liquid burns. Young children are particularly at risk because they cannot recognize heat-related hazards quickly enough to react appropriately. Children's skin is thinner than adults' and burns at lower temperatures and more deeply. A child exposed to 140-degree Fahrenheit liquid for five seconds will sustain a third-degree burn.

"Burn hazards to children include hot foods and beverages, space heaters, steam irons and curling irons," said Paul Cooke, Director of the Division of Fire Prevention and Control. "There's a lot you can do around the home to minimize the risk of burn injuries."

The Division urges caregivers to:

- Check your water temperature. Set your water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. When using water taps, always turn the COLD water on first; then add HOT. Reverse the order when turning water off. Always check bath and sink water with your wrist or elbow before placing your child in it.

"Safeguarding those that live, work, learn and play in Colorado"

- Childproof your home; talk to your child. Playing with matches and lighters is one of the leading causes of fire deaths to young children. Keep these items locked up out of sight and out of reach. Discuss good fires and bad fires and how matches and lighters are to be used responsibly. Explain these items are not toys. Keep burning candles safely out of reach of children.
- Prevent spills. Cook with pots and pans on back burners and turn handles away from the front. Don't place containers of hot food or liquid near the edge of a counter or table and remove tablecloths so children don't accidentally pull hot items down onto themselves.
- Establish a "kid-free zone." Make the stove area a "kid-free zone" (3 feet is a good distance). Never leave your child alone in the kitchen. Don't hold children while cooking or while carrying hot foods and beverages.
- Test food and drink temperature. Taste cooked foods and heated liquids to make sure they're not too hot for children. Never microwave a baby's bottle. Drinks heated in a microwave may be much hotter than their containers. Instead, heat bottles with warm water and test them before feeding your child.
- Keep electrical cords out of reach — especially cords connected to heating appliances, such as coffee pots and deep fryers. Make sure electrical cords can't be pulled or snagged into a bathtub or sink. Don't leave a hot iron sitting on an ironing board unattended.
- Actively supervise. Simply being in the same room with a child is not necessarily supervising. Safety precautions are important, but there is no substitute for giving children your full attention.
- If a child is burned, the burned area should be place in, or flushed with, cool water. Keep the burned area in the cool water for 10 to 15 minutes. Never use ice, ointments or butter. If the burn is severe, immediately seek emergency assistance.

For additional information contact your local fire department and, or these additional resources:

Division of Fire Prevention and Control – General Background Information on Scald Burns
www.cdfpc.org/docs/DFPC_Scald_Burns.pdf

American Burn Association
www.ameriburn.org

Shriners Hospitals for Children – Burn Awareness
<http://www.shrinershospitalsforchildren.org/Education/BurnAwareness.aspx>

Safe Kids USA – Burn Prevention
<http://www.safekids.org/our-work/programs/fire-burn-prevention/>

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