

Both on and off the job, we ought to set high standards for safety for ourselves, our families and the communities in which we live. June is “National Safety Month,” and it is an appropriate time to think about steps we can all take to be safer in our homes, places of work and on the road. The following home safety tips are provided by the Home Safety Council, which is dedicated to educating and empowering families to make their homes safer.

Take a Hands-On Approach to Home Safety

If you ask most Americans where they feel safest, most will say their homes. Of course, our homes are our havens. They are also where accidents occur, resulting in nearly 21 million medical visits on average each year. No one wants to think about being injured or dying at home. Yet every day in homes across America, 55 people die and another 58,000 people are injured and need medical care.

There are simple things you can do to help save lives and prevent injuries. With just a few minutes and your own hands, you and your loved ones can avoid serious and costly injuries. If you install the right products and do some simple planning, you can make your home a safer. These are a few actions you can take today to make a difference in your home; and why not share them with a friend or neighbor.

Falls: Did you know that falls are the leading cause of emergency room visits among children and are the leading cause of injury and deaths among older adults?

- Install grab bars in the tub and shower.
- Provide bright lights over stairs and steps and on landings.
- Secure handrails on both sides of the stairs and steps.
- Use a ladder for climbing instead of a stool or furniture.
- Use baby gates at the top and bottom of the stairs, if babies or toddlers live in or visit your home.

Fires/Burns: Did you know that working smoke alarms cut your family's risk of dying in a home fire almost in half? Protect your loved ones from fires and burns in the home.

- Have working smoke alarms and hold fire drills. If you are building a new home or remodeling, install fire sprinklers.

- Stay by the stove when cooking, especially when you are frying food.
- If you smoke, smoke outside. Use deep ashtrays and put water in them before you empty them.
- Only light candles when an adult is in the room. Blow the candle out if you leave the room or go to sleep.

Be Smart Around Water: Did you know that children can die in as little as an inch of water in just a few minutes? Water can be dangerous for young children.

- Stay within an arm's length of children in and around water. This includes the bathtub, toilet, pools and spas – even buckets of water.
- Put a fence all the way around your pool or spa.
- Empty large buckets and wading pools after using them. Keep them upside down when you are not using them.
- Make sure your children always swim with a buddy. No child or adult should swim alone.
- Keep your hot water at 120 degrees F or just below the medium setting to prevent burns.

Keep Disaster Preparedness in Mind: However difficult a disaster may be to predict, one thing is for sure, we can all be ready when they do happen.

- Have a communication plan with your family
- Decide on a place to meet
- Gather key phone numbers and contact information

- Help your children feel safe
- Discuss different types of weather
- Tell your children that you or another grownup will be there to help
- Put a list of emergency numbers by each phone in the home

- Have "Ready Kits"
- Have supplies handy if you need to stay at home
- Have supplies handy if you need to leave your home

Consider your home's danger areas and take these simple steps to create a safer environment

and reduce your family's risk from potential injuries and disasters. Taking a hands-on approach to keeping loved ones safe at home is easy and does not require a lot of time or money. Insure your home is indeed your haven, keep it safe.

Visit the Home Safety Resource Center at www.homesafetycouncil.org or go to www.homesafetycouncil.org/homesafetymonth to review and download free information, including posters, brochures, safety checklists and additional tips to help safeguard your family.