

## **Safety in the Home**

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There's no place like home...for unintentional injury. Though our homes are supposed to be a safe haven, they can be a place where injuries and sometimes even death can occur. By taking the time to look over our homes for possible hazards, we can reduce the chance of the unimaginable happening. The following is a brief checklist of steps you can take to help keep your home and those living there safe.

### Fall Prevention

- Protect stairs and steps with a secure banister or hand-rail that extends the full length of the stairs on each side.
- Keep all porches, hallways and stairwells well lighted. Stairwells should have a light at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- All walking surfaces should be kept free of clutter, liquids and cords that could cause a fall.
- Non-skid throw rugs should be used to reduce chances of slipping.
- Use no-slip mats or adhesive safety strips or decals in bathtubs and showers to prevent slipping.
- Consider installing grab bars in bath and shower stalls.

### Poison Prevention

- Keep all potentially dangerous products (chemicals, cleaners, medicines, cosmetics, pesticides, etc.) locked up and out of the reach of young children.
- Purchase potentially hazardous products with child resistant packaging.
- Flush all expired medicines and prescriptions down the toilet.
- Read storage and use direction on products before using. Follow manufacturer's instructions for use.
- Never mix household products.
- Keep the national Poison Control Hotline number (1-800-222-1222) and other emergency numbers next to all phones.

### Fire Prevention

- Install smoke alarms on all levels of your home and outside of each sleeping area.
- Test smoke alarms monthly and replace once every ten years.
- Create a fire escape plan. Check all possible exits and escape routes for possible obstacle and to identify any special needs (ladders for second floor windows, etc.). Make sure all windows and locks are in working order. Be sure to include a designated meeting place outside the home for family members to meet.
- Practice fire drills at least twice a year. Practice both during the day and night.

## Home Security

- Use lights liberally both inside and outside the home. Consider purchasing light timers or motion sensors.
- Never hide house keys in a mail box, planter, under a mat or any other obvious location.
- When leaving for an extended period of time: ask a neighbor to park their car in your driveway, have newspaper and mail deliver suspended or collected by a neighbor, double-check to make sure all doors and windows are securely locked.

## Outdoor Cooking Safety

- Keep children and pets away from grill and other cooking equipment until completely cooled.
- Position grills at least 3 feet away from the home, shrubs, bushes and other objects.
- Never use a barbecue grill indoors or in unventilated spaces.
- Never use anything other than a starter fluid designed for use in a barbecue grill when starting a charcoal grill.

## Backyard Safety

- Wear protective equipment when using outdoor machinery.
- Keep garden tools with tines, blades or spikes out of children's reach and store with sharp edges pointing downward.
- Store pesticides in their original containers out of the reach of children. Follow label directions when using.
- Make sure play areas are equipped with shock-absorbing materials such as 9 inches of wood chips, mulch or shredded rubber. \*

\* Consumer Production Safety Commission

For more information on safety in the home visit [www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org).