

Burn Awareness Week – How You Can Help After A Snowstorm – Fire Hits Home

Burn Awareness Week

The week of February 3rd is Burn Awareness week and this year's theme is Contact Burns – Hot Surfaces Damage Skin. Contact burns occur when hot objects are touched – known as thermal burns, but burns can also occur or from exposure to very cold temperatures or contact with something cold for a prolonged period of time (frostbite). Other types of burns are caused by friction (carpet burn), chemical (from acids or solvents) and electrical burns (contact with electrical current). Over 70,000 people went to hospital emergency rooms in 2018 for contact burns, with 1/3 of those under the age of 5.

Burn Safety at Home - Many ordinary things in a home — from bath water to hot food to electrical outlets — can cause burns. To prevent burns, follow these burn safety tips:

- **Reduce water temperature.** Set the thermostat on your water heater to below 120 °F. Always test the water temperature before your child gets in the tub. Aim for bath water around 100 °F.
- **Avoid hot spills.** Keep hot foods and liquids away from table and counter edges. Don't use tablecloths or placemats, which young children can pull down. When using the stove, use back burners and turn the handles of your pots and pans toward the rear of the stove.
- **Use dry oven mitts or potholders.** Hot cookware can heat moisture in a potholder or oven mitt, resulting in a scald burn.
- **Establish “no” zones.** Block access to the stove and fireplace, and make space heaters and water heaters inaccessible. Have a “kid free zone” of at least 3 ft around the stove.
- **Unplug irons.** Store items designed to get hot, such as clothes irons, unplugged and out of reach.
- **Test food temperature.** Food or liquids warmed in a microwave might heat unevenly.
- **Choose a cool-water humidifier or vaporizer.** If you use a hot-steam vaporizer, keep it out of reach.
- **Address outlets and electrical cords.** Cover unused electrical outlets with safety caps. Inserting a fork, key, or other metal object into an outlet could result in an electrical burn. Replace damaged, brittle, or frayed electrical cords.

General first aid for burns and scalds: Treat a burn right away by putting it in cool water. Cool the burn for three to five minutes. Cover burn with a clean, dry cloth. Do not apply creams, ointments, sprays or other home remedies. Remove all clothing, diapers, jewelry and metal from the burned area. These can hide underlying burns and retain heat, which can increase skin damage. Get medical help if needed.

How you can help after a snowstorm

Your local Fire Department depends on hydrants as source of water if there is a fire. When there is a large amount of snow, hydrants can become blocked, or the amount of snow can make it

difficult to access. In the event of a fire, critical life and property saving time will be spent digging out the hydrant. If you have a hydrant near your home, please ensure the hydrant and a 3 foot area around it is clear down to the sidewalk or grass, there is a path to the hydrant and that it is free of any ice. You'll be helping yourself, your neighbors and us in the event of an emergency.

Fire Hits Home

Fire can strike at any time and happen to anyone, and it hits home when it happens to one of our own. A fire broke out in the home of former Avenel Fire Chief Jimmy Karlbon in the early morning hours of January 19. Jimmy and his family were asleep when a fire started in the kitchen. His 6-year-old daughter Madalyn was awakened by the smoke alarms just after 2 am and ran to her Dad when she saw smoke. Jimmy got his family out safely and the family cat escaped on its own and was reunited with them later. No one was injured. Madalyn saved the lives of her family by remembering what she had been taught during Fire Prevention Week and the knowledge that her Dad and her extended firefighting family instilled in her, according to the Avenel Fire Department.

Woodbridge Police Officer Jim Ganci, a former volunteer firefighter with the Woodbridge Fire Department, was one of the first responders on scene. Using his firefighting experience, Officer Ganci took action to knock the fire down with an extinguisher. The efforts of the Avenel Fire Department contained the fire to the kitchen/dining room area but smoke damaged the entire home leaving it uninhabitable, and the family has lost most of their belongings.

If you would like to make a monetary donation to help the family with purchasing groceries, clothes and essential every day items, checks can be made payable to The Avenel Fire Company Community Fund, 346 Avenel St., Avenel, NJ 07001 Checks and donations can be dropped off at the firehouse Monday-Friday between the hours of 8-4 or mailed in.

For additional information on fire prevention and fire safety check out www.woodbridgefireprevention.org and www.nfpa.org/Public-Education