

## Toolbox Talk: At Home Safety, Common Injuries That Will Keep You from The Office

### Introduction/Overview:

Home is one of the most dangerous environments when it comes to preventable accidents. Many home accidents are serious enough for the victim to require advanced medical care and take sick leave. These absences from the workplace put additional burdens on family and co-workers. This toolbox will discuss [three](#) common at-home accidents and the steps to take to prevent them from occurring. These three preventable accidents include falls, poisoning, and burns.

### Statistics:

According to the National Safety Council (NSC), in [2019](#), 173,040 people died of unintentional injury-related accidents and 48.3 million injuries.

The National Safety Council (NSC) has reported about [9.2](#) million people were treated for falls in the nation's emergency rooms.

The National Poison Control Center reported that [one](#) poison exposure occurs every 15 seconds.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reported that in [2019](#) fire claimed around 3,700 lives and caused 16,600 burn injuries.

### Talking Points:

Falls are preventable, but it does take planning and good housekeeping. Some common tips to prevent falls include:

- Keep all walking surfaces free of clutter.
- Clean up spills as soon as they happen.
- Replace lights as needed.
- Ensure all cords are secured and not located in common walkways.
- Secure or remove loose rugs.
- Keep drawers closed.
- Use and ensure stairs have secure handrails.
- Wear house shoes or shoes with skid-resistant soles that are in good repair.
- Ensure rugs and carpets are secured and cannot cause slip hazards.
- If you have pets, ensure they are trained and be careful not to trip over them.
- Use ladders and stepstools properly. Read and adhere to all labels and never use a damaged ladder.

Developed by:



Poisonings are also preventable, but proactive steps must be accomplished.

First, know what can be poisonous in the home. Some possible sources of poisoning include:

- Plants
- Insecticides
- Herbicides
- Spoiled or improperly prepared food (includes water from impure source)
- Chemicals
- Gases (Carbon Monoxide)
- Medication (both legal and non-legal)

Second, know how to control the poisoning hazard: Some controls include:

- Childproof your home.
  - Install safety locks and latches.
  - Store poisons up high and out of sight.
  - Use childproof bottles and containers.
  - Never put poisons in food containers.
  - Be aware of poisons in other homes if visiting.
  - Never leave medications unsecured.
    - Many drugstores have medication drop off boxes for medicines that are either outdated or not needed.
- Never store poisons and food in the same cabinet.
- Return all poisonous products to storage immediately after use.
- Discard all poisons per the labeling guidelines.
- Never mix chemicals incorrectly; always refer to the labeling instructions before use.
- Be aware some plants are poisonous to humans or pets.
- Never put chemicals in unlabeled containers.
- Keep the National Poison Control Hotline in a convenient location 1-800-222-1222  
<https://www.poison.org/>.

Since most burns are caused by thermal heat (fires), we must understand where fires occur in the home. Then we must be proactive in the control of ignition sources. Common sources include:

- Electrical (the most common)
- Cooking

Developed by:



- Candles
- Christmas tree and decoration fires
- Grilling
- Smoking
- Children playing with ignition sources
  - Children may imitate adults who smoke or use matches.
- Lightning
- Intentional fires

So how do we control these causative factors? For the most part, burns are preventable; but the homeowner must take preventive steps to reduce the fire potential. These include:

- Ensure electrical devices and cords are in good repair.
- Never leave food cooking unattended (Do not get distracted while cooking).
- Never leave the skillet handle positioned over the stove's edge (Children can reach and spill the hot contents on themselves).
- Keep matches and other ignition sources in a secured place.
- Ensure flammable liquids are secured and used correctly.
- Never smoke in bed.
- Water fresh Christmas trees daily.
- Turn off all holiday decorations at bedtime or when you leave home.
- Be sure to use fireworks correctly.
- Ensure your family has an escape plan in case of a home fire.
- Never leave lit candles unattended or placed near combustibles.
- Ensure all fires, including grills, are entirely extinguished before leaving.

**Additional Discussion Notes:**

---

---

---

**Final Thoughts:**

Remember, home is one of the most dangerous places we occupy. Injuries in the home have the same consequences as injuries on the job. The employee, family, co-workers, and your employer all suffer when you are injured.

Developed by:



**NOTE:** Always promote discussion with the attendees. If a question comes up that no one in attendance can answer, please contact DHRM/OWC/Loss Control Consultants for assistance.

**Johnny Nugent**

Risk Management Specialist

[johnny.nugent@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:johnny.nugent@dhrm.virginia.gov)

804-225-2168

**Lee Affholter, COSS, ASC**

Loss Control Consultant

[laffholter@lcinnovations.com](mailto:laffholter@lcinnovations.com)

757-256-3364

**Curtis H. Stacy, MESH, ASC, COHC**

Loss Control Consultant

[curtis.stacy@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:curtis.stacy@dhrm.virginia.gov)

434-594-8978

**References:**

Top three common injuries at home:

<https://spryliving.com/articles/the-most-common-household-injuries/>

In 2019, 173,040 people died of unintentional injury-related accidents and 48.3 million injuries:

<https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/>

Fall statistics:

<https://www.nsc.org/work-safety/safety-topics/slips-trips-falls>

Poison statistics:

<https://www.poison.org/poison-statistics-national>

Home poisoning prevention:

<https://www.webmd.com/children/prevent-poisoning-home#>

Burn statistics:

<https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/US-Fire-Problem/Fire-loss-in-the-United-States>

<https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/US-Fire-Problem>

Developed by: