Safety Update

Available online:
www.fss.txstate.edu/ehsrm/programs/safety-coordinator/newsletter2

National Fire Prevention Month

The U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 369,500 home structure fires in 2013. These fires caused 2,755 deaths, 12,200 injuries and $7 billion in direct damage. During 2007 to 2011 roughly one of every 320 households had a reported home fire per year. Half of deaths in home fires occur when most people are asleep from the hours of 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. This is why the National Fire Protection Association is saying hear the beep when you sleep. Here are some tips that can help keep you safe in your home.

• Smoke Alarms – These are still a very important addition to your home. They are widely available and inexpensive. Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home and test it monthly.

• Prevent Electrical Fires – Don’t overload circuits or extension cords. Cords and wires should never be placed under rugs or in high traffic areas. Avoid loose electrical connections by checking the fit of the plug in the wall outlet. If the plug loosely fits, inspect the outlet right away. A poor connection between the plug and the outlet can cause overheating and can start a fire in minutes.

• Keep Plugs Safe – Unplug all appliances when not in use. If a plug is overheating, smells strange, shorts out or sparks – the appliance should be shut off immediately, then repaired or replaced.

• Alternate Heaters – Make sure there is ample space around any portable heating unit. Anything that could catch fire should be at least three feet away.

• Fire Safety Sprinklers – When combined with working smoke alarms, home fire sprinklers greatly increase your chance of surviving a fire. Sprinklers are affordable and they can increase property value and lower insurance rates.

• Create An Escape Route – Create and practice your escape plan with your family from every room in the house. Practice staying low to the floor and checking for hot doors using the back of your hand.

• Position Appliances Carefully – Try to keep TV sets, kitchen and other appliances away from windows with curtains. If there is a wiring problem, curtains can spread a fire quickly.

• Clean Dryer Vents – Clothes dryers often start fires in residential areas. Clean the lint filter every time you start a load of clothes to dry or after the drying cycle is complete. Make sure your exhaust duct is made of metal tubing and not plastic or foil. Clean the exhaust duct with a good quality dryer vent brush to prevent blockage & check for lint build up behind the dryer at least twice a year.


Food Safety Corner

How to pick the perfect apple:

To clean apples under cold running water, use a produce brush to scrub the skin and enjoy!