



THE EHS CONNECTION

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY NEWSLETTER-NOVEMBER 2015

- ◆ Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stovetop so you can keep an eye on the food.
- ◆ Stay in the home when cooking your turkey and check on it frequently.
- ◆ Keep children away from the stove. The stove will be hot and kids should stay 3 feet away.
- ◆ Make sure kids stay away from hot food and liquids. The steam or splash from vegetables, gravy or coffee could cause serious burns.
- ◆ Keep the floor clear so you don't trip over kids, toys, pocketbooks or bags.
- ◆ Keep knives out of the reach of children.
- ◆ Be sure electric cords from an electric knife, coffee maker, plate warmer or mixer are not dangling off the counter within easy reach of a child.
- ◆ Keep matches and utility lighters out of the reach of children — up high in a locked cabinet.
- ◆ Never leave children alone in room with a lit a candle.
- ◆ Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test them by pushing the test button.

NFPA-National Fire Protection Association-discourages the use of outdoor gas-fueled turkey fryers that immerse the turkey in hot oil.

NFPA continues to believe that turkey fryers that use cooking oil, as currently designed, are not suitable for safe use by even a well-informed and careful consumer. These turkey fryers use a substantial quantity of cooking oil at high temperatures and units currently available for home use pose a significant danger that hot oil will be released at some point during the cooking process. In addition, the burners that heat the oil can ignite spilled oil. The use of turkey fryers by consumers can lead to devastating burns, other injuries, and the destruction of property. NFPA urges those who prefer fried turkey to seek out professional establishments, such as grocery stores, specialty food retailers, and restaurants, for the preparation of the dish, or consider a new type of "oil-less" turkey fryer."

SAFE THANKSGIVING COOKING

CARBON MONOXIDE

WHAT IS CARBON MONOXIDE?

Carbon monoxide, or "CO," is an odorless, colorless gas that can kill you.

WHERE IS CO FOUND?

CO is found in fumes produced any time you burn fuel in cars or trucks, small engines, stoves, lanterns, grills, fireplaces, gas ranges, or furnaces. CO can build up indoors and poison people and animals who breathe it.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF CO POISONING?

The most common symptoms of CO poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. CO symptoms are often described as "flu-like." If you breathe in a lot of CO it can make you pass out or kill you. People who are sleeping or drunk can die from CO poisoning before they have symptoms.

WHO IS AT RISK FROM CO POISONING?

Everyone is at risk for CO poisoning. Infants, the elderly, people with chronic heart disease, anemia, or breathing problems are more likely to get sick from CO. Each year, more than 400 Americans die from unintentional CO poisoning not linked to fires, more than 20,000 visit the emergency room, and more than 4,000 are hospitalized.

HOW CAN I PREVENT CO POISONING IN MY HOME?

- Install a battery-operated or battery back-up CO detector in your home and check or replace the battery when you change the time on your clocks each spring and fall.
- Have your heating system, water heater, and any other gas, oil, or coal burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year.
- Do not use portable flameless chemical heaters indoors.
- If you smell an odor from your gas refrigerator have an expert service it. An odor from your gas refrigerator can mean it could be leaking CO.
- When you buy gas equipment, buy only equipment carrying the seal of a national testing agency, such as Underwriters' Laboratories.
- Make sure your gas appliances are vented properly. Horizontal vent pipes for appliances, such as a water heater, should go up slightly as they go toward outdoors, as shown below. This prevents CO from leaking if the joints or pipes aren't fitted tightly.
- Have your chimney checked or cleaned every year. Chimneys can be blocked by debris. This can cause CO to build up inside your home or cabin.
- Never patch a vent pipe with tape, gum, or something else. This kind of patch can make CO build up in your home, cabin, or camper.
- Never use a gas range or oven for heating. Using a gas range or oven for heating can cause a build-up of CO inside your home, cabin, or camper.
- Never burn charcoal indoors. Burning charcoal - red, gray, black, or white - gives off CO.
- Never use a portable gas camp stove indoors. Using a gas camp stove indoors can cause CO to build up inside your home, cabin, or camper.
- Never use a generator inside your home, basement, or garage or less than 20 feet from any window, door, or vent.

HOW CAN I AVOID CO POISONING FROM MY CAR OR TRUCK?

- Have a mechanic check the exhaust system of your car or truck every year. A small leak in the exhaust system can lead to a build-up of CO inside the car.
- Never run your car or truck inside a garage that is attached to a house even with the garage door open. Always open the door to a detached garage to let in fresh air when you run a car or truck inside.
- If you drive a car or SUV with a tailgate, when you open the tailgate open the vents or windows to make sure air is moving through. If only the tailgate is open CO from the exhaust will be pulled into the car or SUV.

DRIVING ERGONOMICS

Driving creates significant stress to the neck and the upper and lower back. While this should go without saying only use cars that you fit into properly. Compact cars often do not fit taller users. For others certain seats may not support them properly. Safety is always the first concern. Never make an adjustment that would make you less likely to see the road, your mirrors, or the instruments easily.

Proper adjustment:

- It is easiest to start with a seat that is completely in the wrong position and bring it into the correct position. Start by pushing your seat all the way back, place it as low to the floor as able, and recline the back 30-40 degrees.
- Bring the seat height up until you can comfortably see the road and instruments and your hips are as high as your knees. If you are too low try adding a cushion or wedge to the seat. This can also decrease vibration from the road which has been shown to contribute to injury. Be sure it does not make you too high so that you have to bend your head down or to the side.
- Scoot the seat forward so you can reach and completely depress all the foot pedals without coming away from the seat back.
- Bring the back forward until you are reclined at a 100-110 degree angle. This decreases the pressure on the discs in your low back. Adjust your headrest so it rests in the middle of your head. Adjust the lumbar support so you have even back support. This should be supportive and comfortable. A lumbar cushion can be added if your car lacks sufficient lumbar support.
- Tilt seat cushion until it evenly supports your entire thigh without pressure in particular areas and does not hit the back of your knees. If it presses unevenly you can restrict circulation and cause discomfort in the legs.
- Adjust the seat belt to fit you instead of adjusting the seat to accommodate the seatbelt position.
- Bring the steering wheel down and toward you to minimize reach. The less your elbows reach forward and up the less the strain on your neck and upper back.
- Now adjust the mirrors. If you start to slouch down or get in a bad position the mirrors will feel as they need to be adjusted and cue you to sit back up.
- Fine tune as necessary.
- Make minor adjustments to your position occasionally to change the stressors on your body. Be sure to stay in a safe supported position. Change your grip on the wheel occasionally.
- Do not use the car as an office. Using the laptop in the other seat creates twisting of the spine. Bending over to fill out paperwork causes your neck to flex forward unsafely.
- Don't store items on the back seat or seat back pockets where reaching for them will cause awkward twisting.
- How you hold the steering wheel is also important. Instead of holding close to the top of the wheel at the 10 and 2 o'clock positions lower them to 9 and 3 o'clock or lower. You can feel the shoulders muscles relax some when you do this. Other than while turning, avoid reaching across your body to hold the steering wheel. For example, don't hold the very top or right side of the wheel with your left arm or vice versa. Try to keep your wrist straight while holding the steering wheel.
- Give your body a few minutes out of the car before lifting things from the trunk.
- Always remove your wallet from your back pocket before sitting. This causes the pelvis to twist stressing the back.
- When getting in to the car sit first and then swing your legs into the car. To get out slide the legs out first and then stand up to decrease low back strain.
- Take frequent breaks to get out and stretch at least every 2 hours. This is important for your back but also your hands as holding a steering wheel for long periods can contribute to carpal tunnel syndrome. If you get to your destination 3 minutes earlier but are stiff and painful you won't be very effective!

From Ergonomics Simplified

HEATING SAFETY TIPS

HEATING EQUIPMENT IS A LEADING CAUSE OF HOME FIRE DEATHS. HALF OF HOME HEATING EQUIPMENT FIRES ARE REPORTED DURING THE MONTHS OF DECEMBER, JANUARY, AND FEBRUARY. SOME SIMPLE STEPS CAN PREVENT MOST HEATING-RELATED FIRES FROM HAPPENING.



- ◆ KEEP ANYTHING THAT CAN BURN AT LEAST THREE FEET AWAY FROM HEATING EQUIPMENT, LIKE THE FURNACE, FIREPLACE, WOOD STOVE, OR PORTABLE SPACE HEATER.
- ◆ HAVE A THREE-FOOT "KID-FREE ZONE" AROUND OPEN FIRES AND SPACE HEATERS.
- ◆ NEVER USE YOUR OVEN TO HEAT YOUR HOME.
- ◆ HAVE A QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL INSTALL STATIONARY SPACE HEATING EQUIPMENT, WATER HEATERS OR CENTRAL HEATING EQUIPMENT ACCORDING TO THE LOCAL CODES AND MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS.
- ◆ HAVE HEATING EQUIPMENT AND CHIMNEYS CLEANED AND INSPECTED EVERY YEAR BY A QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL.
- ◆ REMEMBER TO TURN PORTABLE HEATERS OFF WHEN LEAVING THE ROOM OR GOING TO BED.
- ◆ ALWAYS USE THE RIGHT KIND OF FUEL, SPECIFIED BY THE MANUFACTURER, FOR FUEL BURNING SPACE HEATERS.
- ◆ MAKE SURE THE FIREPLACE HAS A STURDY SCREEN TO STOP SPARKS FROM FLYING INTO THE ROOM. ASHES SHOULD BE COOL BEFORE PUTTING THEM IN A METAL CONTAINER. KEEP THE CONTAINER A SAFE DISTANCE AWAY FROM YOUR HOME.
- ◆ TEST SMOKE ALARMS MONTHLY.

FROM NFPA.ORG

WE ALL WISH **BECKY KEMPNEY** SMOOTH SAILING THROUGH HER DIFFICULT ROAD AHEAD. HER FRIENDS HAVE SET UP A **MEAL TRAIN** PAGE IF ANYONE IS INTERESTED IN DONATING A MEAL OR CASH TO HELP BECKY AND HER FAMILY. THEY HAVE ALSO SET UP A **BRAVELETS BRAVERY FOR BECKY** PAGE WITH \$10 FROM EACH PURCHASE GOING TOWARD BECKY'S MEDICAL EXPENSES.

PLEASE SEE THE LINKS BELOW FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/39q0my>

<https://www.bravelets.com/bravepage/bravery-for-becky>

SUSTAINABILITY

Electric-vehicle charging stations available! In the south parking lot of the Shineman Center, 6 electric cars can charge at a time thanks to newly installed charging stations. This is another great step towards reducing our carbon footprint on campus, and it can be a great convenience for electric car owners. The first four hours of charging are also free! After this free period there is a \$3 per hour charge.

Ergonomic Assessment: Christine Body has been doing ergonomic assessments since 1996 and is available to do them here on campus. She can be reached at 312-2770 and would be happy to assist you with any questions or issues.

NOVEMBER WORD SEARCH

For a chance to win a great prize (more like an OK prize, but-hey, it's a PRIZE!), complete the Word Search and send it via e-mail to lisa.drake@oswego.edu OR through Campus Mail: Lisa Drake, 110 Lee Hall. Make sure to put your name on it! The winner for September was Dave Orr. Look for: Stovetop, Turkey, Steam, Burns, Knives, Electric Cords, Matches, Lighters, Candle, Smoke Alarms, Cooking Oil, Ignite, Carbon Monoxide, Odorless, Colorless, Headache, Dizziness, Weakness, Detector, CO Poisoning, Gas Equipment, Vent Pipe, Chimney, Charcoal, Driving, Stress, Position, Lumbar Support, Heating Equipment.

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CALVIN'S TURKEY DAY TIP:

MAKE SURE YOUR PET HAS A QUIET PLACE TO GO, SHOULD THE HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES BE TOO MUCH FOR THEM. WATCH BEHAVIOR TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE NOT STRESSED.

A COMFY CRATE AND A TREAT-FILLED KONG ARE THE PERFECT MATCH FOR A REST FROM THE THANKSGIVING ACTIVITY!