

# HOMESAFETYMATTERS

SPRING 2018

## LIGHTNING SAFETY TIPS

### When you hear thunder, go indoors

If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you. Your safest option is indoors.

When you hear thunder, immediately move indoors or into an enclosed, metal-topped vehicle with the windows up. Stay indoors until at least 30 minutes after you last hear thunder.

#### Inside a building

- Stay off corded phones, computers and other electrical equipment.
- Avoid plumbing, including sinks, baths and faucets.
- Stay off porches and away from windows and doors.

- Don't lie on or lean against concrete.

#### If you're outside with no nearby shelter:

- Immediately find a low-lying area like a ditch or ravine.
- Never lie flat. Instead, crouch with your feet on the ground and your arms covering your head.
- Never shelter under a tree, cliff or rocky overhang.
- Immediately get away from water.
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity - barbed wire fences, power lines, or windmills.

Source: weather.gov



## PROTECT YOUR HOME WHILE YOU'RE TRAVELING

Planning a vacation? A few simple steps can help keep your home safe while you're gone.

- Don't announce your plans on social media.
- Don't leave anything of value in plain sight at home, especially near windows.
- Give a spare key to at least one

friend, neighbor or family member who can periodically check on your house while you are gone.

- Let the police know when you'll be out of town so they can check your house, too.
- Make sure all your door locks are working.
- Install deadbolts on all doors with outside access.

- Consider installing motion-sensitive outdoor lights.
- Consider a home security system or at least post signs that say you have a security system.
- Trim the shrubs around your home so there's nowhere for burglars to hide.

Source: asecurelife.com

## STAY SAFE WHEN YOU'RE GARDENING

### Make sure your vaccinations are up to date

Before you begin gardening this spring, make sure your tetanus/diphtheria (Td) vaccine is up to date.

Tetanus lives in the soil and enters the body through breaks in the skin.

Gardening makes us especially vulnerable to tetanus infections because we're using sharp tools, digging in the dirt and handling plants with thorns and twigs.

Stay safe when you're working outdoors:

- Make sure your tetanus vaccine is up to date. (All adults need a tetanus vaccination every 10 years.)
- Ask your health care provider if you need any other vaccinations.
- Wear gloves to protect your hands from irritations, cuts and contaminants.

Source: CDC.gov

Spring is around the corner! Are you aware of safety precautions when it comes to

## SPRING CLEANING?

Keep chemicals in original bottles with labels. Open windows and wear protective clothing when handling chemicals. Never mix household cleaners together, it can create a dangerous gas.

In case of a poison emergency, call 1-800-222-1222 immediately.



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## BE PREPARED

### Pack a first-aid kit

Keep at least one first-aid kit in your home and one in your car. Basic supplies include:

- Adhesive tape
- Bandage strips and “butterfly” bandages in different sizes
- Instant cold packs
- Cotton balls and swabs
- Petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- Scissors and tweezers
- Soap or hand sanitizer
- Antibiotic ointment
- Antiseptic solution and towelettes
- Eyewash solution
- Thermometer
- Breathing barrier
- Aloe vera gel
- Calamine lotion
- Antihistamines
- Pain relievers
- Hydrocortisone cream
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent

Source: mayoclinic.org

## SAFE CYCLING

### Keep your kids safe on bikes

Make sure your children ride their bikes safely this spring and summer:

- Even on short rides, make sure your kids wear bike helmets approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. (Look for the CPSC sticker.)
- Inspect your child’s bike - seat, handlebars, wheels, tires, chain and brakes.
- Put reflectors on your child’s bike.
- Make sure nothing can get caught in the bike chain, like pant legs, backpack straps or shoelaces.
- Make sure your child wears close-toed shoes - no bare feet, sandals or flip-flops.
- Decide how far and where younger children are allowed to ride.

Set rules for your child:

- No wearing headphones or talking on cell phones while riding.
- Keep hands on the handlebars and feet on the pedals.
- Don’t ride across piles of wet leaves, deep puddles, storm grates or gravel.
- Stop to check for traffic and walk the bike across busy intersections.
- Ride on the right-hand side of the street in the same direction as cars.
- Don’t ride close to parked cars.
- Obey stop signs and traffic lights.
- Always ride single-file with friends.

Source: kidshealth.org

As weather begins to warm up, look out for

## BICYCLISTS AND MOTORCYCLISTS



Share the road for safety. Motorists need to be aware of the reduced size and visibility of motorcycles and bikes. If you must pass, do so at a safe distance in an adjacent lane.



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## WORKING AT HEIGHTS?

### How to stay safe on ladders

Stay safe working on ladders this spring:

- Keep ladders away from power lines.
- Always keep three points of contact on the ladder (two hands and a foot or two feet and a hand).
- Ladder rungs, steps and feet should be in good condition, clean and dry.
- Only use a stepladder when it’s folded out and locked - never in a closed position.
- Use a ladder only on stable, dry and level surfaces.
- An extension or straight ladder must extend at least 3 feet above the surface you’re trying to reach.
- Don’t stand on the three top rungs of a straight, single or extension ladder.

Source: osha.gov

## KEEP SMOKE/CO DETECTORS AND FIRE EXTINGUISHERS IN GOOD CONDITION

After you set your clocks forward on Saturday, March 11, prepare your house for a safe summer.

### Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Detectors

- Consider upgrading to smoke/CO detectors that can be interconnected wirelessly - so when one sounds, they all sound.
- Test batteries each month and replace batteries at least once a year.
- If an alarm “chirps,” replace it immediately.
- Put smoke/CO detectors in every

bedroom and on each floor.

- Mount CO/smoke detectors at least 10 feet from the stove, less than 12 inches from the ceiling and away from windows, doors and ducts.
- Only use CO/smoke detectors approved by a reputable agency like Underwriters Laboratories (UL).

### Fire Extinguishers

- Keep at least two fire extinguishers in the house - one in the kitchen and one in the garage.
- Check your fire extinguishers regularly and replace as directed by the

manufacturer.

- Make sure they are fully charged, within easy reach and in good condition.
- Check the gauge to confirm that the pressure is correct.
- Make sure the cans, hoses and nozzles aren’t damaged, dented or rusted.
- Make sure the outside of the extinguishers are clean and dry.

Source: usfa.fema.gov