

October 2013

Fire Prevention



UC Safety Spotlight

A UC System-Wide Publication of the Environment, Health & Safety Leadership Council

Poster of the Month

Get Ahead
of the Winter
Freeze



It's not too early to begin preparing for the winter season. Download the

poster to review 10 tips to get ahead of the winter freeze.

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Message From The State Fire Marshal

In September, 2007 a career opportunity happened beyond what I could have ever imagined; I was selected as California's Assistant State Fire Marshal. It also meant that I had the chance to re-ignite a professional relationship that helped form my career development.

For the last 35 years I have had the privilege to work in a profession that gives me great fulfillment. My desire to serve in fire prevention started when I was a "junior member" volunteer firefighter and carried through my formal education at Oklahoma State University to study fire protection and safety engineering technology. My education opened many professional doors and allowed me to serve as a fire inspector and fire marshal for local fire departments. That education and fire service background also gave me the opportunity to serve as a deputy fire marshal for the University of California at Berkeley (UCB) for eight years.

Working on a college campus was not new to me; I had worked for Oklahoma State University Safety Department as a student fire inspector. One could say that I cut my "inspection teeth" on a system where I was not the authority having jurisdiction and being persuasive was an important skill set that helped motivate folks to understand the importance of fire safety. Over the eight year period I worked for UCB I had the pleasure to meet and work with some very committed individuals in the research, facilities, and environmental health world. The campus deputy fire marshal position gave me the chance to break out my radiation safety and industrial hygiene notes from college classes and to work in a system where not only was the campus relying on the Campus Fire Marshal's office to keep fire safety on the minds of campus management, researchers, facility, students, and visitors but the California Office of the State Fire Marshal was relying on us to enforce and obtain compliance for state fire and life safety regulations. This would be another relationship that would be a key part in my future.

During my employment at UC Berkeley, the Office of the State Fire Marshal instituted a program providing individuals, with certain qualifications, a designation to act on behalf of the State Fire Marshal in prescribed situations. I was fortunate to be one of those early "designated campus fire marshals". The program, which is still in effect today, intended to provide oversight of State Fire Marshal regulations for University construction projects on and off campuses by designating qualified campus fire marshals and their deputies. This successful program strengthened an important partnership and provided an increased project approval process necessary during increased University construction. During those years working for the University of California I had unique experiences that strengthened my understanding of California building and fire codes, the opportunity to work with members of the Office of



A scald injury can happen at any age. Children, older adults and people with disabilities are especially at risk. Hot liquids from bath water, hot coffee and even microwaved soup can cause devastating injuries. Scald burns are the second leading cause of all burn injuries. Things you can do to prevent scald injuries include:

- Teach children that hot things can burn. Install anti-scald devices on tub faucets and shower heads.
 - Always supervise a child in or near a bathtub.
 - Test the water at the faucet. It should be less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit
 - Before placing a child in the bath or getting in the bath yourself, test the water.
 - Test the water by moving your hand, wrist and forearm through the water. The water should feel warm, not hot to the touch.
 - Place hot liquids and food in the center of a table or toward the back of a counter.
 - Have a "kid-free zone" of at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared and carried.
 - Open microwaved food slowly, away from the face.
 - Never hold a child while you are cooking, drinking a hot liquid, or carrying hot foods or liquids.
 - Never heat a baby bottle in a microwave oven. Heat baby bottles in warm water from the faucet.
 - Allow microwaved food to cool before eating.
 - Choose prepackaged soups whose containers have a wide base or, to avoid the possibility of a spill, pour the soup into a traditional bowl after heating.
- Fact: Prepackaged microwavable soups are a frequent cause of scald burn injuries (especially noodle soups) because they can easily tip over, pouring hot liquid (and noodles) on the person.

Burn RX - If you experience a burn, do the following: Treat the burn right away. Cool the burn with cool water for 3-5 minutes. Cover with a clean, dry cloth. Get medical help if needed.

the State Fire Marshal (many of them I have served with over the last seven years) and to develop a skill set that stressed the importance of collaboration and persuasiveness when it came to code "enforcement".

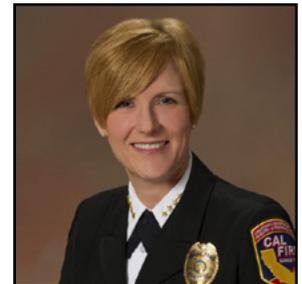
The "Designated Campus Fire Marshal" program has evolved over the years. An important evolution included the recognition of the program within the Health and Safety Code (H&S Code). The change in the H&S Code instilled an obligation onto the designated campus fire marshals making them responsible for the enforcement of specific codes and standards adopted by the State Fire Marshal...in other words, the responsibility for code compliance and enforcement shifted from the OSFM to those Designated Campus Fire Marshals and their staffs. This change to law came about through collaboration between the University of California and the Office of the State Fire Marshal...it came about based on trust and an understanding of the important roles and responsibilities that each group has. Its success is based on a strong memorandum of understanding, open communication, and a skilled workforce within the OSFM and the UC campus fire marshal offices. We are a team that works together to protect the students, staff, and visitors that are spending their days and nights on the campuses of the University of California.

As I reflect back on my incredible opportunities and those that I have had the honor and pleasure to work with, the same topic surfaces. Over the years it has been about partnerships and collaboration because no one person, department, or agency can do it alone. That same thought resonates in the national fire prevention message which was just launched this year. The national message "Fire Is Everyone's Fight" sends the message that we are all in this together and that together we help protect our families, friends, and co-workers from the risk and hazards of fire. So as we approach Fire Prevention Week, let's all take on the responsibility for fire safety and deliver this year's national fire prevention message together; it's a message for us all... "Prevent Kitchen Fires"

Fire Prevention Week – October 6 – 12, 2013

Prevent Kitchen Fires

A brief history on the Firefighter's Burn Institute - On September 24, 1972, a devastating plane crash at Farrell's Ice Cream Parlor killed 22 people and severely burned dozens more. That tragedy identified a critical need for specialized burn care in the Sacramento area. Sacramento Fire Department Captain Cliff Haskell mobilized community firefighters to raise funds for a specialized burn unit at UC Davis Medical Center. The effort established the non-profit Firefighters Burn Institute (FFBI); and, by January, 1974, UC Davis Medical Center began admitting patients to the new Regional Burn Center.



State Fire Marshal - Tonya L. Hoover

Firefighters from all over the region still partner with UC Davis nearly 40 years later to provide the most up-to-date specialized burn services possible. The FFBI recently donated \$2 million to help build the new Firefighters Burn Institute Regional Burn Center at UC Davis Medical Center, which opened in 2010. The new burn center occupies nearly 13,000 square feet, and consolidates burn services, including ICU, outpatient wound care, physical and occupational therapies. For more information, please contact:

Debra Ann Jones RN, TNCC, CNIII,
Firefighters Burn Institute Regional Burn Center
Burn Unit: 916-734-3636

The Firefighters Burn Institute Regional Burn Center at UC Davis Medical Center provides tips on how to reduce your risk of kitchen fires and burns.



College Campus Fire Safety

College students living away from home should take a few minutes to make sure they are living in a fire-safe environment. Educating students on what they can do to stay safe during the school year is important and often overlooked.

- Look for fully sprinklered housing when choosing a dorm or off-campus housing.
- Make sure you can hear the building alarm system when you are in your dorm room.
- If you live in a dormitory, make sure your sleeping room has a smoke alarm, or your dormitory suite has a smoke alarm in each living area as well as the sleeping room. For the best protection, all smoke alarms in the dormitory suite should be interconnected so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- If you live in an apartment or house, make sure smoke alarms are installed in each sleeping room, outside every sleeping area, and on each level of the apartment unit or house. For the best protection, all smoke alarms in the apartment unit or house should be interconnected so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- Test all smoke alarms at least monthly.
- Never remove batteries or disable the alarm.
- Know the location of the nearest fire extinguisher and manual pull station.
- Learn your building's evacuation plan and practice all drills as if they were the real thing.
- If you live off campus, have a fire escape plan with two ways out of every room.
- When the smoke alarm or fire alarm sounds, get out of the building quickly and stay out.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking.
- Cook only when you are alert, not sleepy or drowsy from medicine or alcohol.
- Check with your local fire department for any restrictions before using a barbecue grill, fire pit, or chimenea.
- Check your school's rules before using electrical appliances in your room.
- Only smoke in approved areas – NO SMOKING in the dormitory.

Grease Burns

Most burn injuries happen in the home kitchen. Young children and senior adults are especially vulnerable to burn-related injury and death due to having thinner skin and limited ability to react promptly and properly to a burn situation. Unattended cooking remains one of the leading causes of fire nationally. Things you can do to prevent burn injuries in the kitchen include:

- Clean any grease build-up from the stove, oven & exhaust fan regularly.
- Avoid reaching over the stove for anything while cooking. Store frequently needed items in other areas of the kitchen.
- Keep a lid, baking soda, or a fire extinguisher, rated for class A, B, and C fires, near the cooking area in an easily accessible location EVERY time you cook.
- Have dry potholders or oven mitts near your stove. Using wet potholders could result in a scald burn.
- Keep young children & pets away from cooking areas completely. A "kid free zone" of 3 feet is recommended.
- Dress for fire safety in the kitchen – wear short or tight-fitting sleeves when cooking.
- Turn pot or pan handles toward the back of the stove.
- When deep-frying, use a pot with a lid and a clip thermometer so you know the temperature of the oil.
- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave, turn off the stove.
- Do not toss wet foods into deep-fat fryers or frying pans with hot grease.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly; remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.

A grease fire happens when your cooking oil becomes too hot. When frying, oils will start to smoke before they catch on fire. Most vegetable oils have a smoking point around 450°F, while animal fats like lard or goose fat will start smoking around 375°F. Keep this in mind when choosing oils for cooking different recipes.

In the event your oil does catch fire, do the following:

- Cover the pan with a metal lid - Fire cannot exist without oxygen. A cookie sheet works too. Leave on until the pan is cool.
- Turn the heat off – it's that simple! With the lid on and the heat off, the fire should quickly consume all the oxygen and put itself out.
- Pour on baking soda - Baking soda will extinguish grease fires, but only if they're small. It takes a lot of baking soda to do the job. That's why Steps 1 and 2 are best!
- Use an extinguisher rated for class A, B, and C fires. This is your last resort before you exit out of your home.
- Get out and call 911. If the fire gets out of control, don't try to be a hero. Get out, stay out and call 911. Don't return inside.

Whatever you do, DO NOT do the following:

- Do Not Move the Pot or Carry It Outside - Throwing the pot outside might seem reasonable, but trying to move the pot might splash burning oil on you, causing a severe burn.
- Do Not Use Water - Pouring water can cause the oil to splatter and spread the fire. The vaporizing water can also cause a severe scald burn injury to your skin.
- Do Not Throw Any Other Baking Product On the Fire - Flour or salt or sugar might look like baking soda, but it won't react the same. Only baking soda can help put out a grease fire.

Resources:

- <http://whatscookingamerica.net/Information/CookingOilTypes.htm>
- <http://www.nfpa.org/~media/Files/Safety%20information/Safety%20tip%20sheets/cookingsafety.pdf>
- http://www.usfa.fema.gov/citizens/home_fire_prev/cooking.shtm
- <http://www.ffburn.org>

Photo from Mass.gov



Microwave Oven Safety



With busy lives, families rely on the microwave oven as a quick way to heat up a meal, warm up a drink or defrost dinner. While the convenience of the microwave oven is something we take for granted, safety should not be. By following a few simple safety tips you can prevent painful burns and possible fires.

- Purchase a microwave oven that has the label of an independent testing laboratory. Make sure to complete and return the product registration card. This way the manufacturer can reach you if there is a recall on the product.
- Plug the microwave oven directly into the wall outlet – never use an extension cord.
- Make sure the microwave oven is at a safe height, within easy reach of all users.
- Open food slowly, away from the face. Hot steam or the food itself can cause burns.
- Food heats unevenly in microwave ovens. Stir and test before eating or giving to children.
- Never heat a baby bottle in the microwave. Since a microwave oven heats unevenly, it can create hot pockets, leading to burns. Warm a bottle in a bowl of warm – not hot or boiling – water, or by running it under the tap.
- Always supervise children when they are using a microwave oven.
- Use only microwave-safe food containers or dishes.
- Never use aluminum foil or metal in a microwave oven.
- If you have a fire in the microwave, leave the door closed, turn the oven off and unplug it from the wall. If the fire does not go out, get outside and call the fire department.

Info from www.nfpa.org/education

Kitchen Safety at Home and Work



Most of us have a good idea of safe kitchen practices around the home, but how do these translate into the work environment? While the fundamentals are the same, there are some key differences that you should be aware of. This article will start with a basic review of kitchen safety in the home and then examine the differences to workplace kitchen environments.

Most of us learn about kitchen safety at home, from family or through firsthand experience dealing with kitchen mishaps. Follow these kitchen safety tips at home to ensure a safe cooking experience:

- When cooking with oil, do not leave the stove unattended. Grease and oil fires account for a large percentage of kitchen fires in the home.
- Wipe up spills as soon as possible. This not only prevents slipping hazards, it keeps the possibility of unburned food smoking or catching fire.
- Avoid leaving uncooked (or cooked for that matter) food on the counter prior to use. Proper food handling prevents contamination which can make you, your family or guests sick.
- Position handles inward to avoid accidental contact. Position handles of pots and pans to the back of the stove or counter which makes it harder to accidentally bump or catch them on something, which can result in a burn or spill.
- Cook at proper temperature. Most stoves/ovens have several settings to accommodate food preparation. Use a temperature that's appropriate for the food being prepared.
- Use care when handling anything that's steaming. Steam burns can happen with any hot food, not just pots of boiling water. Use care when removing lids, draining pots, or moving dishes with hot food or liquid.

When considering kitchen safety at work, think about the kitchen or food preparation area in your breakroom or wherever you might prepare food while at work, not a commercial kitchen. These spaces might be a designed feature, or a countertop with a microwave or toaster oven plugged in. No matter what the configuration, it's a community space where you probably have little control over how it's used, cleaned or equipped. In addition to the points above, a few more things to consider when at work:

- Wash everything before using. Dishes and utensils left in the drain rack or on the shelf may or may not be clean.
- Make sure donated appliances are safe. Many ad hoc breakrooms have kitchen appliances that someone brought in from home. Ensure appliances are in good working order and free from defect before use.
- Avoid cross contamination of food in the refrigerator. Clean fridge out weekly. Properly store food in containers and monitor for freshness.

As a Fire Chief I can't wrap this up without reminding you about the importance of having a functioning fire extinguisher easily accessible from the kitchen. It's an inexpensive way of providing some protection should you have a small kitchen fire.

By: Jeff Trapp, Fire Chief, UCSC

Careless Chris

Careless Chris Piles It On...an Imaginary Scenario



"Why do they always wait until the day before move-in to give us these work orders?" Careless Chris mused aloud as he set the last screw with his portable drill. It choked and stalled, the battery finally giving out after a full day's work. The campus carpentry shop had been running full steam all summer trying to catch up on repair requests but it seemed there was always an extra push in the fall.....

[Read the story](#)

Feedback, Please

Send an email to safetyspotlight@ucdavis.edu to submit your comments on the October 2013 issue or to suggest content ideas for future issues. We look forward to hearing from you!

COMING SOON!

Systemwide Training and Tools



Check out our November 2013 issue to learn about upcoming systemwide training and tools that are being developed within the UC System.

connect

Know where to turn on your UC campus for the information you need to keep yourself, your workplace and your environment safe and secure. Click on the campus links below to connect to local program, educational and informational resources.

[UC Berkeley](#)

[UC Riverside](#)

[UCOP](#)

[UC Davis](#)

[UC San Diego](#)

[UC ANR](#)

[UC Irvine](#)

[UC San Francisco](#)

[UCLA](#)

[UC Santa Barbara](#)

[UC Merced](#)

[UC Santa Cruz](#)

UCI Fire Safety Division wins National Award

UCI Fire Safety Division wins national award for efforts to reduce false alarms



The National Association of STATE FIRE MARSHALS

UC Irvine's Fire Safety Division recently received a Life Safety Achievement Award for its 2012 accomplishments from the National Association of State Fire Marshals' Fire Research & Education Foundation, in partnership with the Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Co. The honor was bestowed based upon the campus's efforts to reduce the number of false alarms to which the Orange County Fire Authority was responding. By working with OCFA, UC Irvine was able to track and identify antiquated fire alarm systems. Once they were replaced, OCFA's overall number of false-alarm runs dropped 45 percent. "We are honored to be the only agency in California and the only university to receive this honor," said Dale Saunders, UC Irvine's campus fire marshal. A branch of Environmental Health & Safety, the Fire Safety Division is responsible for fire safety in residences, labs and other university buildings. It also monitors and inspects fire suppression equipment and conducts chemical inventories.

<http://news.uci.edu/briefs/uci-fire-safety-division-wins-national-award-for-efforts-to-reduce-false-alarms/>