

Tips on summer fire safety

Summertime means spending more time outdoors for many Kansas families. Summer is also when there is an increase in visits to the emergency room due to fire and burn injury. Barbecue grills, campfires and fireworks can cause serious injuries to children. Safe Kids Kansas, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and the Kansas Highway Patrol remind everyone to practice fire safety to ensure your family has a fun, safe summer.

Statistics show that as summer approaches, we see an increase in the number of fire/burn emergency department visits in Kansas. Kansas Hospital Association data from 2007 to 2010 show fire/burn Emergency department visits peaked in the month of July. This is likely due to the increase in use of fireworks. In 2013 more than a third of Kansas hospitals reported 133 injuries due to fireworks according to the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

It is no surprise that many families enjoy the sparkles and booms of fireworks. But it is important to recognize that fireworks are explosive and can be dangerous. More than half of the firework injuries reported by Kansas hospitals in 2013 were to children zero to 18 years old, according to the Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office. In addition, it is important to note that many minor injuries due to fireworks are not even reported.

"Even when handled correctly, fireworks can sometimes be defective or simply unpredictable," said Cherie Sage, Safe Kids Kansas. "Even sparklers, which are typically viewed by parents as relatively harmless fireworks for children, cause se-

rious burn injuries, accounting for one-third of the injuries to children under five in the United States."

Follow these fireworks safety tips:

- Closely supervise children around fireworks at all times.

- Transport fireworks in the trunk of your vehicle. If your vehicle does not have a trunk, ensure fireworks are kept out of direct sunlight.

- Read and follow the directions on the packaging.

- Never modify fireworks or use homemade or illegal fireworks.

- Little arms are too short to hold sparklers, which can heat up to 1,200 degrees. Let young children use glow sticks instead. They can be just as fun but they don't burn at a temperature hot enough to melt glass.

- If a child is injured by fireworks, call 9-1-1 immediately.

- The best protection is to attend public fireworks displays and leave the lighting to professionals.

- Many families enjoy camping during the summer months and making s'mores around the campfire is often part of that tradition. Be fire smart when you head for the great outdoors, and be prepared to take extra precautions when you may be far from a water source.

- Follow these campfire safety tips:

- Supervise children and keep them away from the fire.

- Teach kids how to stop, drop and roll if their clothing catches fire.

- Keep plenty of water nearby and have a shovel for throwing sand or dirt on the fire if it gets out of control.

- Never leave a campfire un-

attended.

When extinguishing the fire, drown it with water. If you do not have water, use dirt. Continue adding and stirring until all material is cooled. However, do not bury coals, as they can smolder and start to burn again.

Grilling food outdoors is a national summer pastime. But before lighting up the grill, know the facts and keep safety in mind. Gas grills were involved in an average of 7,100 home fires every year from 2006 to 2010 in the United States, while charcoal or other solid-fueled grills were involved in an annual average of 1,200 home fires, according to the National Fire Prevention Association. Grill fires at home are estimated to cause an average of 10 deaths, 100 injuries, and \$37 million in property loss each year in the U.S.

Follow these grilling safety tips:

- Gas and charcoal grills should only be used outdoors.

- The grill should be placed away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.

- Keep children and pets away from the grill area

- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill to prevent flare ups.

- Never leave your grill unattended.

Safe Kids Kansas, Kansas Department of Health and Environment and Kansas Highway Patrol urge parents to practice these safety tips to reduce the risk of a fire or a trip to the emergency room and ensure this summer is a safe one.

For more information about fire safety, www.safekids.org.

A leg to stand on



The Ag Valley Co-op site located east of Norton is going to see some changes soon. A new leg is being added to the elevator and soon to follow will be a railroad loading dock so that rail cars can be loaded right from the site. Crews are seen here unloading the newest leg that will be added.

- Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

Roadwork to begin in Decatur County

As early as next week, a project to repair four bridges north of Oberlin on U.S. 83 is scheduled to start. The repairs consist of removing a layer of concrete, deck patching, and placement of a concrete overlay.

Traffic will be reduced to one lane and controlled by stoplights. Minor delays should be expected, not exceeding 15 minutes.

The Kansas Department of Transportation urges all motorists to be alert, obey the warning signs, and "Give 'Em a Brake!" when approaching and driving through the construction zone.

KDOT awarded this construction contract - totaling \$1.1 million - to Wildcat Construction Co., Inc. The project should be completed early November, weather permitting.

This project is funded by TWORKS, the transportation program passed by the Kansas Legislature in May 2010. Find out more about this and other TWORKS projects at: <http://kdotapp.ksdot.org/TWorks/>.

For questions concerning the project, please contact KDOT Area Two Construction Engineer Rob Percival at (785) 626-3258 or percival@ksdot.org.

Leydig-Brown family reunion

The fourth annual Leydig-Brown Reunion was held June 21 at the KSNWK Ballroom in Hays, with over 50 people in attendance after a delicious pot luck dinner at noon. The rest of the day was spent visiting, taking pictures, and looking at old photo albums.

Those attending were Grant and Cindy Roark, Haley and Colton, Cassville, Mo., Verlee Clark, Exeter, Mo., Russ and Sheila Wright, Springfield, Mo., Sherry Graff and Jacob Hall, Wuaner, Okla., Airel Dunker

and Azia, North Platte, Neb., Brandon and Betty Jacques, Gibbon, Neb., Tammy Tiliton, Mike and Lisa Leydig, Kearney, Neb., Debbie Florum, Alma, Neb., Shelly Roark, Liberal, Nancy Brown and Rhonda Jacques, Manhattan, Barry and Stephanie Jacques, Cadence and Harper, Wamego, Blake and Nicole Jacques, El Dorado, Hazel Brown, Smith Center, Paul and Lawana Shelitto, Gaylord, Grace Van Roekel, Phillipsburg, Burdett and Belva Leydig, Prairie View, Terry and Debbie Bot-

torf, Hays, Dale and Marilyn Brooks and Corey, Hays, Lance and Brandi Brooks, Hays, Eric and Amanda Littlechild, Desire and Wyatt, WaKeeney. Friends present were Shirley Hrabe, Ken and Janis Foos, Richard and Mary Ann Harcrow, all of Hays.

A very special thank you to Barry and Stephanie Jacques, and to Brandon and Betty Jacques for being hosts and hostesses for this year. You did a super job and we really appreciate all you did.

Free health and wellness program exercises

Dealing with stress? Want to add more exercise to your life? Have concerns about depression? Get answers to these questions and other health topics during free wellness programs that are now available at Decatur Health Systems' Golden Age Center at 105 W. Maple Street in Oberlin.

The first program, Stress and Aging, will be presented July 16 from 3-4 p.m. The programs are open to the public and will be presented monthly at Golden Age Center via interactive televideo. They are available through Decatur Health Systems' membership in the Midwest Cancer Alliance, the outreach arm of The University of Kansas Cancer Center. Local residents, Sam and Kathy Willcoxon, have provided financial support for the educational programs at Decatur Health Systems.

"The interactive televideo technology at Decatur Health Systems makes it possible for people in our community

to have access to health programs that might not otherwise be available in this area," says Johnathan Owens, CEO of Decatur Health Systems.

Midwest Cancer Alliance's executive director, Hope Krebill, and staff psychologist, Dr. Susan Krigel, were both in Oberlin recently to meet with Decatur Health Systems' staff and go over the interactive televideo system.

The technology allows health professionals from Midwest Cancer Alliance and Turning Point: The Center for Hope & Healing to lead the programs from Kansas City while residents in rural communities like Oberlin can view the presentations on large screens. Participants can ask the presenters questions and share their feedback during and after the program.

"It's just like sitting in a room with a presenter except they are on a large screen instead of in front of a podium," explains

Krigel.

Licensed Social Worker, Cathy Pendleton, will be presenting a program on resilience in the fall. She noted that many of the participants in other communities have had very positive feedback about the program. "We've heard from participants that they wished friends and family had attended with them because they would find them helpful, as well," says Pendleton.

"We think this will be a great service for Golden Age Center residents as well as many others in the Decatur County area," says Dorothy Moore, director of the Golden Age Center.

The Stress & Aging program, presented by Moira Mulhern, Ph.D., will explore the science behind how stress impacts aging and provide ways to deal with stress throughout our lives. To attend on July 16 from 3-4 p.m. please call 785.475.2208 to register and get information about other upcoming programs.

What children do in the summer affects school work

Experience shows us that what children do in the summer affects directly how they do in school. For example,

"Summer slide" is an event that occurs when kids, out-of-school for summer, lose reading skills. When they return to school in the fall, these students must spend time remediating their skills and can fall behind in the process. Children from low-income families are especially at-risk for summer slide.

Summer learning loss impacts grades. For example, it accounts for about 2/3's of the ninth grade achievement gap in reading alone.

Governor Sam Brownback's Kansas Reading Roadmap initiative is focused on promoting universal third grade reading proficiency in schools all across the state. In partnership between the Kansas Department for Children and Families and the Kansas Department of Education, the Kansas Reading Roadmap works with schools and nonprofits to:

(1) ensure every child receives high-quality instruction in school

(2) provide individualized after school tutoring to help strug-

gling readers and

(3) support and empower families to take an active role in their own children's education.

(4) offer summer programming to prevent reading loss.

Summer Programs make a difference!

This summer, the Boys & Girls Club of Manhattan is offering summer school for six weeks for the bottom quartile of Lee & Theodore Roosevelt Elementary students to help fill the summer learning gap. Longitudinal studies indicate that the effects of summer learning programs endure for at least two years after participation.

In addition, Department for Children and Families has partnered with Boys and Girls Clubs to provide KidzLit programming to 1,590 children in towns and cities like Hutchinson, Lawrence, Manhattan, Topeka, Ft. Leavenworth, Potawatomi Nation, Kickapoo, Coffeyville, and Wichita this summer. The researched-based KidzLit program directly addresses summer reading loss, targeting at-risk youth.

Libraries are Ideal for Summer Reading!

While summer programs are

effective, not every child has access to one. The good news is that the Kansas State Library supports local libraries across the state to help them promote summer reading. In fact, over 85,000 Kansas children participated in library reading programs just last summer.

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