

# National Burn Awareness Week begins on Monday

During National Burn Awareness Week next week, Safe Kids Kansas reminds parents and caregivers that fire is just one cause of burn injuries – children can also be seriously injured by hot foods and beverages, heating appliances, hot pots and pans, electrical currents and chemicals.

Among all accidental injuries, fire and burns are the number five cause of death in children ages 14 and under – in part because young children cannot recognize heat-related hazards quickly enough to react appropriately. Children's skin burns at lower temperatures and more deeply than that of older children and adults. A child exposed to 140-degree Fahrenheit liquid for five seconds will sustain a third-degree burn.

Disease Control and Prevention Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System, 88,849 children in the country 14 and under were treated for unintentional fire/burn injuries in 2009 and in 2007, 457 died due to unintentional fire/burn related injuries. Between 2003 and 2007, 28 children up to 14 died from unintentional fires and burns in Kansas.

Scald burns, caused by hot liquids or steam, are more common among young children, compared to contact burns, caused by direct contact with fire, which is more prevalent among older children. Hot tap water accounts for nearly one in four of all scald burns among children and is associated with more deaths and hospitalizations than any other hot liquid burns.

"Kids are also at risk around hot foods and beverages, space heaters, steam irons and curling irons," says Cherie Sage, state director for Safe Kids. "There's a lot you can do around the home to minimize the risk of burn injuries in everyday life."

Here are some things you can do.

- Reduce water temperature. Set your hot water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Consider putting anti-scald devices (about \$40) on each water faucet and showerhead. Check the bath water with your wrist or elbow before placing your child in it.
- Prevent spills. If possible, cook with pots and pans on back burners and turn handles away from the front. Avoid wearing long sleeves or baggy clothes in

the kitchen. Don't place containers of hot food or liquid near the edge of a counter or table and remove tablecloths.

- Establish a "kid-free zone." Make the stove area a "kid-free zone" (three feet is a good distance). Mark it on the floor with bright tape. Never leave your child alone in the kitchen. Don't hold children while cooking or carrying hot foods and beverages.
- Test food and drink temperature. Taste cooked foods and heated liquids to make sure they're not too hot for children. Never microwave a baby's bottle. Drinks heated in a microwave may be much hotter than their containers. Instead, heat bottles with warm water and test them before feeding your child.
- Keep electrical cords out of

reach, especially extension cords and cords connected to appliances such as coffee pots and deep fryers. Make sure cords can't be pulled or snagged into a bathtub or sink. Don't leave a hot iron sitting on an ironing board unattended.

• Childproof your home. Cover open electrical outlets so children can't insert metal objects into outlets. Lock matches, lighters and flammable materials out of a child's reach. Keep children away from candles and open flames.

• Actively supervise. Being in the same room with a child is not necessarily supervising.

• Don't let children play with or ignite fireworks. In Kansas from 2000-2008 there were 21 hospital discharges due to fireworks injuries among children 14 years and

younger. Fireworks are intended for use by adults in open spaces with supervision for every child present.

• It is still important to take precautions against fire, too. "You need a smoke alarm on each level of your home and in every sleeping area. Make sure each alarm actually works," says Sage. Test smoke alarms once a month and replace batteries once a year (except for longer-lasting lithium batteries; refer to manufacturer's instructions). A working smoke alarm reduces the risk of dying in a fire by about 50 percent.

For more information about burn prevention, visit [www.usa.safekids.org](http://www.usa.safekids.org) or [www.safekids-kansas.org](http://www.safekids-kansas.org).

## Department of Transportation says: designate a driver for Super Bowl Sunday

The Kansas Department of Transportation is urging families and friends gathering across the Sunflower state on Sunday to enjoy Super Bowl XLV to arrange now for a sober designated driver or make other plans to avoid drinking and driving.

"In Kansas, fans don't let fans drive drunk," said Deb Miller, Kansas Secretary of Transportation, echoing the national campaign supported by the NFL and several safe-driving organizations.

In addition to encouraging sober designated drivers or other safe game-day travel plans, Miller said many colleges in Kansas offer Safe-Ride programs for student safety.

"We remind Kansans that any amount of alcohol can impair judgment and driving skills," Miller said. "That's why we encourage the use of sober drivers to get home safely after the game."

Col. Ernest E. Garcia, Superintendent of the Kansas Highway Patrol, said drivers can expect to see troopers across the state stepping up the enforcement of traffic laws through Super Bowl Sunday.

"Designating a sober driver or taking a cab helps protect you from ruining this fun day with a DUI arrest and a trip to jail – or worse,

a crash that injures or kills you or someone else," Miller said. "We want every Kansan to be safe before, during, and after the big game. Having a sober designated driver should be an obvious call in every fan's play book. Make sure designated drivers know how much we appreciate their responsible decision, and let's make Super Bowl XLV extra special – and extra safe – in the Sunflower State."

Several websites – [www.FansDontLetFansDriveDrunk.org](http://www.FansDontLetFansDriveDrunk.org), [www.nhtsa.gov/Impaired](http://www.nhtsa.gov/Impaired) and [www.StopImpairedDriving.org](http://www.StopImpairedDriving.org) – offer guidance to keep Sunday safe.

### Tips for hosts:

- Reserve the most convenient parking spots for designated drivers.
- Greet guests at the door by asking who will be their designated driver.
- Show all your guests that you care for their safety by offering their designated drivers the best seat to watch the game, front-of-the-line buffet privileges, or a fun party gift.
- Before kickoff, arrange ride-sharing for guests without a designated driver.
- Have plenty of nonalcoholic beverages on hand, and serve plenty of food.
- Only serve alcohol to guests over 21 years of age.

• Just like at NFL stadiums, signal "last call" and stop serving alcoholic beverages at a predetermined time, such as the end of the third quarter.

• Keep local cab phone numbers by your phone, or save them in your cell phone for quick, one-touch convenience.

• Take appropriate steps to prevent anyone from driving while impaired.

• Be prepared to invite guests to spend the night if an alternative way home is not available.

### Tips for guests:

• Designate your sober driver when planning your outing, or before the game begins.

• Leave your car keys at home if you plan to drink.

• Reward your designated driver by paying any parking fee, buying a tank of gas, picking up the driver's tab for their food and drink, or offering to be the next designated driver.

• Add taxicab phone numbers to your cell phone, or install a taxi app or mobile Web page in your smart phone.

• Take appropriate steps to prevent anyone from driving while impaired.

• Always buckle up; it's your best defense on the road.

## Drought-tolerant corn may stoke competition

Seed for two new drought-tolerant corn varieties will be in limited release this spring, targeted for farmers on the western edge of the Corn Belt.

DuPont (Pioneer Hi-Bred) and Syngenta developed the new varieties through traditional breeding techniques – with a little advanced technology thrown in to speed the process of picking which parent plants to try.

The duo's entry into the world market could start fierce competition for rain-challenged growers' business. Biotech varieties in the pipeline for future release may have an even bigger impact than today's hybrids, said Kraig Roozeboom, agronomist with Kansas State University Research and Extension.

"Either way, drought-tolerant corn could expand seed compa-

nies' markets," he said. "Continued expansion of corn acreage at the expense of other crops, such as wheat and sorghum, will mean greater corn seed sales – which is the most profitable sector of the seed market."

Roozeboom added that technology isn't the only reason new-generation corns are arriving so fast, compared to other standard crops. The seed industry has been making larger investments in improving corn yields, largely because corn has been generating more dollars to invest. Herbicide- and insect-resistant corn varieties, for example, were earlier money-makers.

Market factors have been pulling agriculture toward increased corn production, Roozeboom explained. Corn remains the primary base for U.S. ethanol manufactur-

ing. World consumption of animal protein has been on the rise, too, increasing demand for feedgrains.

The agronomist said that so far, the best ways to address those market forces are to:

• Get more acres into corn production, including land with limited precipitation.

• Reduce the risk of corn crop losses while increasing yields in water-limited production areas, such as central and western Kansas.

Much of western Kansas has deep silt loam soils with high water-holding capacity. So, despite sparse rainfall, successfully growing dryland corn is possible, so long as enough stored soil moisture is available to complement limited rainfall during the growing season.

Roozeboom said that as global

temperatures rise, on-going improvements in cropping systems may also be necessary to maintain and expand corn acreage and production. High residue, no-till production systems have already been essential for the success of dryland corn in more arid environments. Cropping systems that conserve both water and soil will become ever more important for sustaining long-term production.

"Of course, moisture problems aren't as big a worry for irrigated farms," Roozeboom said. "However, irrigated farms with limited well capacity could also reduce their risks if the new-generation hybrids perform as advertised. Water is a scarce resource that is getting scarcer."

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