

MSU-ES Dawg Tracks



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Safety Tips: Top Five Hidden Home Hazards

Our homes, whether an apartment, manufactured home or a single family home, is the place where we all feel the most comfortable and secure. However, if we lose a loved one in our home for whatever reason, it can turn happiness into a place of temporary tragedy. Hopefully, this would be temporary as we Southerners live with a strong faith in God, and that along with family, will help to heal a tragedy.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), 33.1 million people are injured by consumer products in the home. The CPSC has warned us for years about some of these products, and more recently, there are new ones from new products and technology.

The CPSC has formulated a list of the top five home hazards that people may use every day but are unaware of the dangers they can cause. The CPSC states that with little or no investment, incidents and injuries from these dangers are preventable simply by being aware of these hazards. Following are the hazards and how to deal with them:

- **#1 MAGNETS** - Since 2005, there has been 1 death, 86 injuries and 8 million magnetic toys recalled. As the number of toys with magnets has increased, so have the number of serious injuries to kids.

~ In several hundred incidents, magnets have fallen out of toys and are swallowed by children. Small intact pieces of building construction sets are the source of magnets being swallowed.

~ If two or more magnets are swallowed or one magnet and another metal object swallowed, they can attract to one another through intestinal walls, getting trapped in place. They can also attract in the body and pinch or twist the intestines, causing holes, blockages or infection and may cause death if not treated properly and promptly.

Watch closely for magnets and magnetic pieces and keep them away from young children. If you have a recalled toy with a magnet, call the company and ask for instructions on how to return it.

- **#2 RECALLED PRODUCTS** – Each year there are about 400 recalls. The CPSC has a reputation of getting recalled items off the shelves, such as toys, recalled clothing, jewelry, appliances, tools, electronics and electric products. Once the consumer has purchased a product of this nature, they have to be aware or on the lookout.

Dangerous products must be removed from the home.

Sign up on: <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/notify.aspx> for free e-mails on hazardous products. CPSC isn't spam. It could save a life or debilitating injury.

- **#3 TIP-OVERS** – These cause an average of 22 deaths per year. In 2006 there were 31 and an estimate of 3,000 injuries. Furniture, ranges or TV's can tip over and crush young children. Deaths and injuries can occur when young children try to pull up or fall against TV stands, shelves, dressers, bookcases, or chests. Sometimes people place TV's on the top of furniture and leave items like remote controls, toys or treats. Young children can pull up to reach these objects, and they could pull the item off on them causing the possibility of head trauma.

We should verify that all furniture is stable on its own. In some cases, it might be good to anchor some pieces to the floor or attach to the wall. Ranges and stoves should be installed with anti-tip brackets.

- **#4 WINDOWS AND COVERINGS** – Window cords cause an average of 12 deaths each year. Window falls result in an average of 9 deaths and 3,700 injuries to children each year. Children can strangle on venetian blind, window drapery and drapery cords that form a loop. Parents should use cordless blinds or at least keep them tied up out of reach of young children. It is recommended to cut the loop and install safety tassels at the end of each cord or install tie-down devices. You should never place a child's crib or playpen within reach of window blinds.

The dangers of windows don't stop with window coverings and pull cords. Kids love to play around windows. They can be injured or die from falling out of windows. Window screens are for bugs, not to protect young kids.

Safeguard your windows – repair the pull cords by cutting the ends, installing tassels and installing window guards or stops.

- **#5 POOLS AND SPAS** – From 2002 through 2004, there were 15 injuries and 2 deaths relating to pool and spa accidents. The suction from a pool drain can be so strong that it can hold an adult under water, but most incidents involve children. A body can be sealed against a drain, or hair can be pulled down through the drain cover. Missing or broken drain covers are major reasons many entrapment incidents occur. Pool/SPA owners should consider installing a Safety Vacuum release system (SVRS) which detects when a drain is blocked and automatically shuts off the pool pump or interrupts the water circulation to prevent an entrapment.

Each time that you are using a pool or a spa, be sure to check for entrapment hazards. Always check to make sure that appropriate drain covers are in place and undamaged.