Spring Forward and Review Your Safety Checklist

Time to Change the Clocks



Daylight Saving Time begins every year on the second Sunday in March. We "lose" an hour when the clocks are set forward and for many, that means a tired couple of days as our bodies adjust. The consequences of fatigue can be serious, so plan accordingly.

Daylight Saving Time, which in 2021 begins Sunday, March 14, means it is also a good time to review your spring safety checklist. The River Forest Fire Department would like to offer the following safety tips to discuss with everyone in your family.

Smoke Alarms

Three out of every five home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Test your smoke alarms every month and replace the battery at least once a year. If the alarm makes a "chirping" sound, replace the battery immediately.

Smoke alarms should be in every bedroom and in the common areas on each floor of a home. Mount them at least 10 feet from the stove to reduce false alarms, less than 12 inches from the ceiling and away from windows, doors and ducts.

Smoke alarms can be interconnected wirelessly. That means, when one sounds, they all sound. A Consumer Product Safety Commission survey found this is the best way to notify everyone in a home if there is a fire. Be sure to purchase smoke alarms with the label of a reputable testing agency, like Underwriters Laboratories (UL).

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Anything that burns fuel can potentially become a source of carbon monoxide, an invisible, odorless gas that can kill. CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each bedroom and on every level of the home. The safety tips for CO detectors mirror those of smoke alarms: change the batteries, test them and interconnect them, if possible. Also, make sure vents for your gas appliances (fireplace, dryer, stove and furnace) are free and clear of snow or debris.

Family Emergency Plan

The National Safety Council recommends every family have an emergency plan in place in the event of a natural disaster or other catastrophic event. Spring is a great time to review that plan with family members. Have a home and car emergency kit. The Federal Emergency Management Agency says an emergency kit should include one gallon of water per day for each person, at least a three-day supply of food, flashlight and batteries, first aid kit, filter mask, plastic sheeting and duct tape, and medicines. Visit the FEMA website for a complete list. The emergency plan also should include:

A communications plan to outline how your family members will contact one another and where to meet if it's safe to go outside

A shelter-in-place plan if outside air is contaminated; FEMA recommends sealing windows, doors and air vents with plastic sheeting

A getaway plan including various routes and destinations in different directions

Also, make sure your first aid kit is updated.

Get Rid of Unwanted Medicines

NSC recommends you take unwanted or expired medicines to a prescription drop box or take-back event near you. NSC offers free Stericycle Seal & Send envelopes, so you can send your unwanted medication to be safely destroyed. The Village of River Forest has an Expired Medicine Drop Box in the Lower Level Lobby of the Village Hall.

Are you Getting the Urge to Clean?

With the warm weather comes a desire to shine and polish your home. However, when warning labels are ignored or chemicals fall into the wrong hands, disaster can occur. Learn what you can do to keep you family safe around poisons in the home.

Window Safety

With warmer temperatures arriving, it is important to practice window safety, especially in homes with young children. Find more information about window safety.

For more information, please contact the River Forest Fire Prevention Bureau at 708-714-3562.

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