

# Have a Burn-Safe Winter!

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Injuries are not accidents...they are predictable and preventable. Your caution can make the difference!

## Clothing Fires

Clothing fires are easily preventable if you learn the facts about fabrics and their flammability, and then take safety precautions to keep children away from flame and heat sources.

Not all fabrics burn the same. The way a fabric is made (knit, weave, lace, etc.) and finishing treatments can affect the way a fabric burns. Heavy close structures ignite with difficulty and burn more slowly than light, thin or open-weave fabrics.

Some fabrics will burn quickly; others will melt and can actually melt to the skin.

## Close-fitting clothes are less likely to catch fire than loose-fitting ones.

Clothing must come into contact with an ignition source to catch fire. Clothes that fit closer to the body are less likely to accidentally



come in contact with a heat source such as a candle flame, a hot stove burner or a gas flame. Clothes designed with a loose, flowing design or with ruffles, fringe or trailing ties that extend from the body are more at risk for contact with a heat source.

Clothes that have a quick-release feature such as a snap-front closure are desirable because they can be pulled off quickly if ignited. This increases the chance that the garment can be removed before serious burn injury occurs. Look for children's clothing marked "flame resistant" on the label.

## Burning Characteristics of Fibers (from more safe to less safe)

**Modacrylic:** Burns very slowly with melting. May melt and pull away from small flames without igniting. Self-extinguishes.

**Wool and silk:** Burns slowly and is difficult to ignite. May self-extinguish.

**Nylon, olefin, polyester and spandex:** Burns slowly and melts when burning. May melt and pull away from small flames without igniting. Melted area may drip off clothing carrying flames with it, but not to the extent of acetate and acrylic. Residue is molten and hot and difficult to remove. May self-extinguish.

**Acrylic:** Burns similarly to acetate, except that it burns with a very heavy, dense, black smoke. It drips excessively.

**Acetate:** Burns with a rapid flame and melts when burning. May melt and pull away from small flames without igniting. Melted area may drip off the clothing carrying flames with it. When flames have died out, the residue is hot, molten plastic and is difficult to remove from any surface.

**Rayon:** Burns similarly to cotton and linen, except that it may shrink up and become tighter to the body.

**Cotton and linen:** Burns with a hot, vigorous flame and does not melt away from the flames.

## Flame resistant fabrics burn slowly.

Flame resistant or flame retardant fabrics are those that ignite with difficulty, burn slowly when set on fire, and go out or self-extinguish when the source of flame is removed. Because of this, flame resistant fabrics allow more time to remove clothes or put out the fire. This little margin of safety can make a big difference in the extent of burn injury. *Always launder flame resistant fabrics according to manufacturer's instructions.*

## Treadmill Burns

The popularity of exercise equipment in the home has grown over the years. It provides the opportunity for busy parents to maintain a healthy lifestyle in the convenience of their own homes. However, it poses a real hazard when children are around. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 25,000 kids are injured by home equipment every year. Children are injuring their hands when they get caught in the back of the treadmills where the tread wraps around a roller. Children are also suffering from friction burns, some serious enough to require skin grafts, when they press their hands on the moving belt. Protect your kids.



- Do not use treadmills with toddlers nearby.
- Have childproof on/off switches or programmable lockout codes.
- Keep toddlers occupied in a confined space or corral.
- Unplug the treadmill when not in use.
- Hide the kill switch key.

## Gas Fireplaces Pose Burn Hazard

Temperatures of the glass in front of the glowing flame from a gas log can range from up to 392° in 6.5 minutes to 473° in 14 minutes of use. There are no flickering, crackling exposed flames to send a warning signal of **HOT** to curious outstretched fingers of young children. Therefore, parents need to be extremely cautious and vigilant of their youngsters around gas fireplaces. Prevention is the key.



- Supervision is of utmost importance. Do not leave a child unattended in a room where a gas log is burning.
- Teach older preschoolers to observe a “NO Zone” - at least 36 inches away from the fireplace. (This is the same “NO Zone” established around the kitchen stove).
- Light the fire when children aren’t watching. If a remote control is used, keep it out of reach of children.
- Burn the gas fireplace when children are asleep.

## Children’s Bathrobes Recalled

Children’s bathrobes sold at Ross Stores were recalled in September 2006 by the CPSC due to a burn hazard. The recalled bathrobes are made of 100 percent cotton terrycloth and failed to meet the children’s sleepwear flammability standard. The bathrobes were sold in several color combinations including: white with pink pockets and a green collar; dark blue with yellow pockets and an orange collar; and light pink with a hood with pig ears, eyes, and nose. The recalled robes were infant and toddler sizes. The label on the inside of the garment reads, “Que Cute”.

## Blow it out before you go out!

Candle use increases with the colder weather and the holiday season. Thus, the possibility of fire and burns increases. Again, prevention is the key. Remember:

- Place candles out of the reach of children and pets.
- Keep candles away from things that can burn.
- Stay in the same room with burning candles; never leave them burning unattended.
- Avoid candles with combustible items embedded in them such as twigs, flowers or leaves.
- Keep all lighters and matches hidden out of the reach of children!

## Dancing with Your Stars!

A good cardio-vascular workout can be achieved through dancing. You will set a good example for your youngsters by including them in your workout routine—safely! Find some music with various beats and rhythms that you and the kids will enjoy. Lead your “stars” in various types of simple, repetitive movements to the beat of the music. You will get a workout; your children will burn up some of their energy instead of their hands; and you will all sleep well at night!

