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Hand washing, *Your Best Defense!*



The American Society for Microbiology has conducted its second survey of Americans hand washing practices. The news is not good, 1 out of 3 people do not wash their hands after using a public restroom.

In the phone survey 95% of the respondents claimed to wash their hands after using a public restroom, however observations revealed that only 67% actually did wash up. In all of the cities women washed their hands more often than the men did (75% verses 58%).

Hand washing may seem like a silly thing to conduct a survey on but apparently many people have forgotten that good hand washing is the best preventative to a host of infectious diseases. Disease causing germs can enter your body when unwashed hands touch your nose, mouth, eyes or any open wounds.

Unwashed hands contribute to a host of infectious disease problems. Regular hand washing reduces the spread of antibiotic resistant bacteria. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates the cost of treatment of antibiotic resistant infections costs about \$4 billion a year.

Food related illness could be reduced through proper hand washing. Hands can transfer germs from contaminated raw meat, eggs and other foods to other surfaces. Food related diseases cost about \$22 billion for medical care and productivity losses annually.

To do your part to stop the spread of germs wash your hands regularly. Typically you should wash your hands as follows:

Before Preparing or eating food
Treating a wound or caring for someone sick
Inserting or removing contact lenses

After Using the bathroom
Handling raw meat, poultry or fish
Changing a diaper
Blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
Treating someone who is injured or sick
Handling garbage
Handling an animal or animal waste



HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

It's that time of year that many folks want to give their offices a festive look for the holidays. So here are the things you need to know to make it a safe holiday too!

1. Only artificial trees and wreaths can be used. In fact, any real vegetation such as corn stalks, bales of hay/straw, etc. are not to be used.
2. Only use approved (UL or Factory Mutual) electrical decorations, and make sure they are all unplugged at the end of the day.
3. Ensure that decorations do not block any exits, emergency doors, exit lights, pull stations, or fire extinguishers.
4. No open flame devices such as candles, lanterns etc. are allowed.



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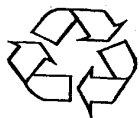
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Got a Cold? Eat Chicken Soup, It Really Works

Grandma always said to eat chicken soup to relieve the symptoms of the common cold.

Well, researchers have conducted a study at the Nebraska Medical Center and found Grandma was right, chicken soup does help!

They used a recipe that contained not only chicken but also onions, sweet potatoes, parsnips, turnips, carrots, celery and parsley with salt and pepper. In addition they included commercially prepared soups for comparison purposes. It was found that all of the soups did provide some relief to varying degrees.

What exactly does chicken soup do? Chicken soup appears to contain several substances with beneficial medicinal properties including an anti-inflammatory mechanism that eases the symptoms of upper respiratory infections.



OSHA Now Accepts Worker Complaints On-line

Workers can now use the Internet to file complaints about health and safety hazards at their workplace. Previously, complaints had to be either mailed or telephoned into OSHA. With the new Internet option, OSHA hopes to make the process of filing a complaint even easier. The Occupational Safety and Health ACT of 1970 gives employees the right to file complaints about workplace safety and gives the complainants the right to request that their names not be revealed to their employers.

OSHA estimates it only takes about 10 minutes to complete the on-line complaint form. All complaints are investigated and many can be resolved informally, while others may result in an on-site OSHA inspection. Additionally, the site contains important information about workers' rights and provides links to other occupational safety and health resources.



Firearm Safety is No Accident

Good hunting skills are no accident. These skills require training and practice before the abilities become second nature. The same can be said for firearm safety; it is a habit that needs to be practiced. Safe hunting habits can save your life or that of your partner and make a hunting trip an adventure and not a tragedy.

Hunting accidents have been on the decline in the past ten years. This decline has been attributed to the use of blaze orange in the field and hunter education programs. Even with the decline there were still 1019 hunting accidents with 93 resulting in fatalities in the 1997 season. The most common type of accident involves the victim not being seen by the shooter. The second leading cause of hunting accidents is self-inflicted. These accidents occur because of improper handling of a loaded firearm in some manner.

Much of hunting safety is common sense. The following tips should be incorporated into any good hunter's routine before, during and after the hunt.

- Wait until you're in the field before loading your gun.
- Before handling your gun, check both the magazine and chamber to make sure it is unloaded.
- During a hunting break, unload your gun and leave the action open.
- Before firing, be sure you know where your hunting partners are and that the firing zone is safe. Also, be certain of your target and where your shot will stop.
- Whether your gun is loaded or not, control the muzzle so that it always points in a safe direction.
- Unload your gun and leave the action open when you're crossing fences or going through slippery, difficult terrain.
- Make absolutely sure your firearm is unloaded before placing it back in your vehicle or residence.
- Be sure to unload firearms before storing them in your home.
- Keep all guns locked in a safe place or equipped with trigger locks.
- Store ammunition in a separate location from your firearms.
- Remember: Alcohol, drugs and firearms don't mix.



Home Fire Myths and Facts

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports that approximately 4,000 people die in fires and more than \$4 billion worth of damage occurs during residential fires annually. In many cases the occupants are unaware of the potential problems in their houses. The following are just some of the myths that abound concerning fire safety in the house.

Myth: The smoke from fire isn't the real danger.

Fact: Smoke kills more people than burns do. In a matter of minutes, fire robs the air of oxygen and fills it with carbon monoxide and other deadly gases.

Myth: Matches, lighters and lit tobacco products aren't big fire culprits anymore.

Fact: NFPA statistics show that most fatal fires are from smoking material and are most likely to occur at night when people are asleep.

Myth: You can leave home with food in the oven.

Fact: Most fires start in the kitchen. Turn your oven and burners off if you must leave the kitchen. Another problem area is messy stovetops; grease and spilled foods can cause a fire.

Myth: Portable heaters can safely keep you warm through the night.

Fact: Portable heaters are designed and built to provide extra warmth for short periods of time. They are not designed for long term unattended operation. Also, keep portable heaters at least three feet away from bedding, furniture and any other combustible items. They should never be left on when you are not in the room with them.

Myth: Flickering lights can be ignored.

Fact: Dimming of lights, blown fuses, tripped circuit breakers, frayed cords and other electrical problems may mean that the system is overloaded, an electrician should check out the problems. Remember to watch those holiday decorations too!

Myth: Gasoline and other flammable liquids can be safely stored in the house.

Fact: Flammable liquids (including gasoline) should never be stored where they can come into contact with heat or flames. This includes any room in the house and many garages that have heaters and water heaters in them. Flammable liquids should be stored in properly designed and approved containers at all times.

Myth: Smoke alarms last a lifetime.

Fact: Smoke alarms should be replaced every ten years. Also, the batteries should be replaced at least annually. To ensure proper operation, smoke alarms should be tested every month by pressing the test button.

Another important issue is home sprinkler systems. Many new homes and renovation projects are including the installation of a home fire sprinkler system. These systems can greatly reduce the devastation of a home fire if properly installed and maintained.

To help protect you and your loved ones from fire, it is suggested that you review your house to identify emergency escape routes and hold walkthroughs/drills so everyone knows what to do in case of an emergency.



Work Related Injuries

Slips, trips and falls are some of the most common accidents at home and in the workplace. With the holiday season in full swing many of us are very busy and preoccupied, not always looking as we rush about. To help avoid a slip, trip or fall, look at the following items and keep them in mind for both home and work:

- Keep pathways open, do not block or restrict them.
- Never run cords across open areas, they should be kept away from walkways.
- Remove hazards, harmless items like pens and pencils can cause a slip!
- Clean up liquid spills immediately and thoroughly.
- Avoid climbing and reaching, always use step stools and ladders properly.
- Watch for loose rugs or carpets.

Take the time to keep your home and office safe from accidents, and have a safe holiday.

Reported Injuries, August to October 2000

Description	Number of Claims
Strains or injuries	8
Struck or injured	5
Falls or slips	16
Pinch injuries	6
Cut, punctures or scrapes	4
Striking against/stepping on an object	3
Motor vehicle collision	1
Miscellaneous	4
Total number of claims	47



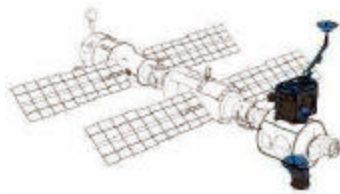
IN THE NEWS....

Scientists have confirmed the extinction of Miss Waldron's red colobus monkey during a six-year search for the primate in West Africa. This is the first documented case of primate extinction in the 20th century.



The federal government and private sector are teaming up to battle infectious diseases with a new Challenge Grant. The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases is providing matching funds to provide new drugs and vaccines for malaria, tuberculosis, influenza and dengue virus.

The international space station is open for business. The first permanent crew arrived in early November.



Russian space officials are calling it an end of an era. The decision has been made to deorbit the Mir space station in February 2001, 15 years after its launch.

DID YOU KNOW....

- 1859 Publication of Charles Darwin's seminal work on evolution, *On the Origin of Species*.
- 1907 Harvey Washington Wiley, M.D. was appointed the first administrator of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Known as the Father of the Pure Food and Drugs Act.
- 1933 Thomas Hunt Morgan awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his discovery concerning the role played by the chromosome in heredity.
- 1970 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) opens under the directorship of William Ruckelshaus.
- 1980 Congress passed the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, CERCLA also known as the Superfund Act.



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