



ARCOLA-PLEASANT VALLEY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

For Immediate Public Release

Arcola-Pleasant Valley Volunteer Fire Department (APVVFD) is pleased to submit the following Fire Safety information for inclusion in your upcoming Neighborhood newsletters and publications.

Springtime Fire Safety

By Fire Chief Tony Schloss, APVVFD

Arcola, VA - As what I hope is the last of the winter's snow melts, as the tree branches begin to show buds, and as the sight and sounds of the birds get more frequent, we face a new set of safety concerns going from winter into spring. As always, the Arcola-Pleasant Valley Volunteer Fire Department desires to keep you safe from harm and in good health; prevention of injuries is our goal. While we will always be there for you should something go wrong and you have need to call 9-1-1, we much prefer to see our neighbors not get hurt in the first place. To that end, we have put together a few safety tips that go along with the new season.

Change the Batteries

Daylight Saving Time begins this year on March 14th, and we all have been reminded for years to change the batteries in our smoke detectors when we move our clocks forward in the spring. This is still excellent advice, but many families now have other safety devices in their homes, such as Carbon monoxide (CO) detectors and combination CO/flammable gas detectors. If you own these devices and they are battery-powered, or they have a battery backup, be sure to change the batteries in these devices as well when you "spring ahead" this year.

Gas Grilling

As the weather starts to turn warmer, many of us can't wait to get out on the patio and fire up the grill. Many people don't realize, however, that fire departments respond to an average of 7900 home fires involving grills, hibachis, or barbecues each year nationwide, with over 100 injuries and fatalities as a result of gas grill fires and explosions. Most of these fires occur when someone first uses a grill that has been idle for a long period of time, such as during the winter, or when refilling and re-attaching the grill's gas container. If you own a gas grill fueled by liquefied petroleum (LP) or propane, please be sure to do a thorough check of the equipment before using it, following the manufacturer's instructions. (I can tell you from personal experience that squirrels will eat holes in the hose over the winter.) *Always* use the grill outdoors in a well-ventilated area – never indoors.

Be sure to place the grill well away from the home and deck railings, and never operate the grill under the eaves of the home or on a balcony. For more grilling safety tips, please visit the National Fire Protection Association website at <http://www.nfpa.org>, or the Propane Education & Research Council at http://www.usepropane.com/consumer_safety.

Spring Cleaning

Many families like to clean their home in the spring, giving the home a nice fresh look and feel to match the season. This is a great thing to do! It's important to stay safe while you're doing it, especially from falls and poisoning, two of the top causes of home injuries. Here are a few tips to help you stay safe as the weather turns warmer:

- Always keep stairs, steps, and landings clear; don't set items here while cleaning out closets or reorganizing.
- Five-gallon buckets are often used while cleaning, but they create a serious drowning danger to young children. Never leave a bucket (or any standing water) unattended, and store buckets empty and upside down.
- Never mix cleaning products together; the contents of different products may react and create a very dangerous environment.
- Never use gasoline to clean something.
- Don't stand on a chair if you must climb to reach something; instead, use a stepladder and stand below the top rung to avoid the ladder tipping over.

We hope that you enjoy the change of seasons, but please be careful.

APVVFD will be again hosting the **Spring EMS Open House** this May. (We will be announcing the date as soon as it is available.) The EMS Open House is held annually on a Sunday near EMS Week (May 16 thru May 22) at the **Arcola-Pleasant Valley Volunteer Fire Station, 24300 Gum Springs Road (Route 659 between Evergreen Mill and U.S. 50)**. Everyone is invited to come and have fun with the Department. Best of all – *it's free!*