

# JIF NEWS

A Quarterly Newsletter from the Somerset County Joint Insurance Fund featuring Safety, Health & Wellness



## NOVEMBER 4TH Fall Back

### A HOME PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST FOR TIME CHANGE

On **Sunday, November 4, 2018**, we come to the end of Daylight-Saving Time in most of the United States. With an extra hour in the day – and winter on the way – it's a good time for a seasonal home preparedness checklist!

As you circle the house, resetting clocks to Standard Time, make time for this short safety checklist. It'll see you into the winter from a safe--and organized--home:

**Change the clocks, change the batteries.** Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors save lives ... if they are powered on by a fresh battery. Safety experts recommend replacing smoke and carbon monoxide detector batteries twice a year--so celebrate Time Change Sunday with fresh batteries all around.

Energy savings hint: don't toss the replaced batteries just yet. While they're likely not fully charged, replaced batteries can still do duty in children's toys, media players or electronic devices. Squeeze the last drop of power out of them before you recycle!

**Replace light bulbs.** Long dark winter evenings call for a little illumination! Since you'll have stepladders out to reach smoke detectors and clocks on Time Change Sunday, double up on safety (and energy savings) by checking light bulbs and fixtures. Consider replacing conventional bulbs with energy-efficient compact fluorescent or LED bulbs. The U.S. Environmental Protection estimates that replacing standard bulbs with energy-efficient ones saves over \$30 in electricity costs over their lifetime.

**Prepare for cold and flu season.** Cold weather is here and so are colds and the flu; will your household be prepared if illness strikes?

Check the medicine cabinet, and assess stocks of over-the-counter medications. Do you have sufficient non-aspirin fever reducers, cough syrup, and decongestants needed to fight colds or flu? Has the thermometer gone missing? Be sure Dr. Mom is ready at the first sign of seasonal illness!

In the pantry, a stockpile of canned soup and lemon-lime soda can ease cold symptoms and fight off dehydration--and don't forget to stock up on disposable tissues for all those coughs and sneezes!

**Make or review your family emergency plan.** If an emergency strikes, will your family know what to do?

Review your family's emergency plan, or create one for the first time. Update phone numbers, addresses and contact information, and post an Emergency Information Page near the phone.

## DEEP FRYING A TURKEY CAN LEAD TO A FIERY DISASTER

A deep-fried turkey is one of the most delicious ways to serve your Thanksgiving bird. However, every year people make the mistake of frying a frozen bird, causing untold fire damage to their homes. Oil has a higher boiling point than water. When a frozen turkey is dropped into hot oil, the ice begins to turn to steam. The rapidly expanding steam causes the oil to boil over. This is called a B.L.E.V.E. — Boiling Liquid Expanding Vapor Explosion.

### Tips for avoiding a turkey disaster:

- Use fryer outside away from any structures
- Don't overfill pot with oil
- Keep oil under 350° F – the hotter the oil is the more combustible it is
- Thoroughly defrost turkey: allow 24 hours for every 10 pounds the turkey weighs
- Turn off flame before putting in turkey
- Keep approved grease-fire extinguisher nearby
- Finally, lower turkey into pot slowly



# HOLIDAY ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS

*Make safety the first item on your list this holiday season.*

### Light up safely over the holidays:

- Choose the right light for the job: light strings and other decorations are rated for indoor or outdoor use. Read the package instructions, and never exceed the recommended wattage.
- Replace damaged electrical products (cords, plugs, ornaments).
- Avoid plugging too many lights and decorations into an outlet. Overloaded circuits can overheat and start a fire.
- Use Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) outlets when plugging in outdoors.
- Buy holiday decorations that have the mark of an accredited certification agency on the package.
- Once the package is opened, remember to check for the appropriate approval sticker appearing on the cord for products incorporating light strings.

### Extension Cords/Plugs:

- Avoid overloading circuits with plugs and extension cords—this can create overheating and result in a fire. Fuses that frequently blow and circuits that trip can indicate too many items are connected to the circuit.
- Never remove the third prong on plugs—this "grounding pin" prevents shock in the event of electrical equipment failure.
- Plug outdoor electrical decorations into Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) protected outlets.
- Don't run extension cords under carpets, through doorways, or in places where they can be damaged by furniture.
- Keep outdoor connections above-ground and out of puddles; don't run them across driveways and/or walkways.

### Installing Decorations:

- No more than three light strings can be safely connected together in most cases—read manufactures instructions for directions.
- Make sure bulbs don't touch supply cords, wires, cloth, paper, or any material that's not part of the light string.
- Use the proper clips for securing lights and decorations. Staples and nails can damage electrical cords.
- Check for overhead power lines before using a ladder to put up decorations, or when you're hanging lights or decorations on trees.

- Holiday decorations aren't designed for year-round use and can deteriorate over time. Take them down when the holidays are over.



### Remember to:

- Watch that children don't put electrical decorations or cords in their mouths.
- Keep an eye on pets that may chew or damage electrical cords.
- Turn off holiday lights and decorations when you leave the house or go to bed.

# FALL / WINTER WORD FIND PUZZLE

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