



Frontline

Westerville Division of Fire Newsletter

Quarter 4 2014

Station 111
400 W. Main Street
Station 112
727 E. Schrock Road
Station 113
355 N. Spring Road
Emergencies
9-1-1
Non-emergencies
(614) 901-6600

Holiday Gift Guide for Fire Safety

The season of holiday gift buying is upon us. While you're creating your shopping list, the Westerville Division of Fire has gift suggestions to promote fire safety and prevention.

Smoke detectors/alarms. A replacement of smoke detectors is probably necessary if the equipment is more than 10 years old. WFD recommends battery-operated wireless interconnected smoke alarms because when one alarm sounds, they all sound. The alarm will be heard in any part of the home. Dual-sensing alarms use ionization and photoelectric technology, which maximize detection of the type of fire that may occur. Look for these listings on the packaging. Smoke alarms with strobe lights, low-frequency tone and/or vibration features are recommended for people who are deaf or hearing-impaired.

Carbon monoxide detector. Carbon monoxide is considered the silent killer because it is often undetectable (colorless, odorless). Carbon monoxide alarms are inexpensive and can be purchased anywhere a smoke detector/alarm is available. (Combination alarms are also available.) Place these devices in sleeping areas.

Fire Extinguisher. WFD recommends a multi-purpose

"ABC-rated" extinguisher that is large enough to put out a small fire but not so heavy that it is difficult to handle. Place one on every level of the home.

Flameless candles. Flameless candles are a great replacement option to reduce fire risks. Another tip: lantern-style candleholders are a good idea because the sturdier base will help prevent potential tipping when lit.



Flashlights and batteries. Fortunately in Westerville, our power outages are few. However, a nice, durable flashlight is a great gift. Add a pack of batteries and your gift may be extra handy when needed.

Fire escape ladder. Escaping a fire from a second-level window is a scary thought. A fire escape ladder is a great peace-of-mind item to store in a second or third level area.

Chimney sweep gift certificate. A chimney sweep may be a great relief for a fireplace user. Household fires can easily start when

creosote builds up in the chimney flue.

More than fire protection. A vehicle safety kit with jumper cables, flashlight, blankets, sand and a small shovel is a classic gift for any driver, especially new drivers.



Fire Chief Brian Miller

Continuing a tradition of excellence

It's been about two and a half months since I've had the great privilege of accepting the appointment as Chief of the Westerville Division of Fire. Serving the residents of Westerville and Blendon Township in this role is a tremendous honor, and one for which I've been preparing for many years.

My love for the fire service has been life-long. It's a passion my family has encouraged, and I was lucky to always know it was the path my career would take.

As a 15-year veteran of the Westerville Division of Fire, I've had the ability to grow and develop in several positions since starting as a part-time firefighter in 1999. Most recently, I served as Deputy Chief, and Chief Fire Marshal before that. These experiences have given me the chance to see our operations from many perspectives, and I have come to know and appreciate what the community needs and expects from the Division.

My goals are to continue the excellence and fine legacy of our department, providing safe, reliable fire safety and protection as well as emergency medical response services. I also intend to keep community partnerships strong and our citizens engaged so that they know and trust us if we ever must respond to their home in the event of an emergency.

I look forward to opportunities to meet more of our neighbors and friends, and hope you find the Fire Division very visible in the community. Look for us at community events, and please stop to say hello so we can get to know one another. Stay well and safe, Westerville.

Fire Risk: **Ventilation Fans**

Bathroom ventilation fan fires are a common occurrence. In fact, the Westerville Division of Fire has seen an increase in calls related to bathroom ceiling exhaust fans.

These ventilation fans are not made to run continuously. They are to be used for a period of time while exhausting the moisture in the bathroom. ***It is very important to turn your ventilation fan off before you go to bed or leave the house, or when it is not in use.***

Fires are caused when these ceiling fans in bathrooms are left running for a long period of time and overheat.

Additionally, bathroom fans can build up lint and dust over time. Under the right conditions, the motor can overheat and ignite nearby combustible materials. ***It is important to inspect and clean bathroom fans regularly.*** The Fire Division recommends removing the cover and using a vacuum attachment to clean the fan blade and its components. ***Make sure to shut off the circuit breaker prior to beginning to clean.***

Another recommendation: have your bathroom vent fan replaced by a certified electrician every 10 years. If you notice the noise level of the fan increasing or if the fan begins making any unusual noises, it may also be time for a replacement. The ultimate safety solution is to have an electrician replace the standard on/off switch with a timer that will automatically shut the fan off after 20 or 30 minutes.

Division NEWS



News and **Announcements**

The WFD Fire Prevention Bureau will host two special classes this winter. Each class is FREE. Registrations are accepted online or at the Westerville Community Center (350 N. Cleveland Ave).

Home Safety Solutions for Seniors

Westerville Senior Center
Tuesday, January 27
2-3:30 p.m.
Activity #101051-01

Home Fire Safety Inspection

Westerville Community Center
Thursday, February 26
7-8 p.m.
Activity #101051-02

Derek Robinson was sworn in on Tuesday, October 21 as Deputy Chief of the Westerville Division of Fire. Robinson most recently served a Lieutenant, and has had a 20-year career with the City of Westerville.



WFD Partners with **Otterbein University**

The Westerville Division of Fire has recently partnered with Otterbein University to promote campus fire safety. Last summer, the University Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Office joined with several staff members from the Equine Center on Spring Road to coordinate and teach hands-on barn fire safety to WFD personnel. Westerville firefighters were trained on how to rescue Otterbein horses in the event of a barn fire. The training included a complete tour of the Equine Facility as well as basic horse handling techniques.

The Division's Fire Prevention Bureau is also collaborating with Otterbein to improve laboratory fire safety by identifying hazards in laboratories. The University is making chemical storage data available so firefighters will know what types of hazards they will face when responding to certain buildings. The Bureau also joined with EH&S to conduct fire safety training for nearly 100 resident assistants as well as label all campus fire department connections and emergency exit routes.

For more information, please contact the Westerville Division of Fire at (614) 901-6600.



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