



BOCES

Health & Safety

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2021 | Issue #1



WHAT'S INSIDE

- Fire safety at home and school.....1
- Tick awareness.....3
- Arson prevention at vacant buildings.....4
- Warm weather brings pest activity.....5
- Keep your family fire safe - make an escape plan.....7



Safety Topics for K-12 Students

The purpose of this newsletter is to offer discussion topics that school districts can rely on to meet the instruction objectives of Section 808. A variety of seasonally specific topics will be presented in the areas of fire safety, injury prevention, and life safety. Educators can incorporate these topics into other curriculum areas or present them as a stand-alone subject at an age appropriate level.

Section 808 - Education Law



A total of 45 minutes of instruction is required in grades K-12 for each month school is in session as a stand-alone subject or integrated into other curriculum areas. The topics to be covered are (1) identification of conditions that may lead to fire in home, school, and community (2) procedures to follow in the event of a fire in home, school, and community, (3) preventative measures to reduce the risk of fire and arson (4) injury prevention, and (5) life safety.



CONTRIBUTING TO THIS ISSUE



Dutchess BOCES
Health & Safety
845-486-8087



Orange-Ulster BOCES
Health & Safety
845-781-4887



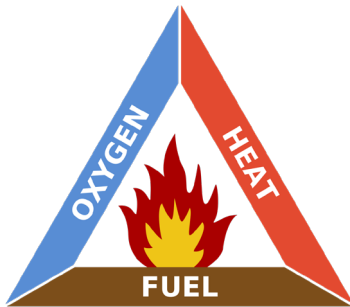
Sullivan BOCES
Health & Safety
845-295-4110



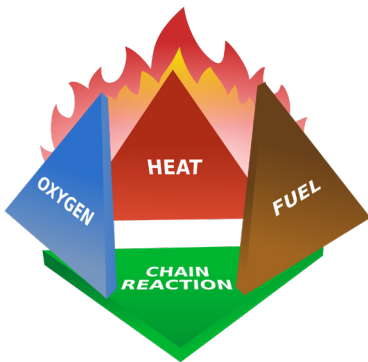
Ulster BOCES
Health & Safety
845-255-1450 x1361



Fire safety at home and school



Fire Triangle



Fire Tetrahedron

WHAT IS FIRE?

Known as one of Earth's elements, fire is the by-product of the process of combustion. For combustion to occur and for fire to exist, you must have three core ingredients. Heat, oxygen and fuel, when combined together, form the Fire Tetrahedron or Fire Triangle, resulting in a chemical reaction known as fire. Fire displays itself as both visible light, the flames you see, and heat emission, the warmth you feel. Understanding how fire works provides a better approach to fighting and preventing fires. The most important detail to remember is that all three core ingredients must be present for fire to exist. Remove even one and the fire extinguishes.

Let's look at a couple basic firefighting techniques and why they work:

Type A Fire Extinguisher (water filled)

Works by reducing heat to below the fuel's ignition point and displaces oxygen.

Fire Blanket

Works by smothering the fire and not allowing oxygen to interact with the heat and fuel source.

Type BC Fire Extinguisher (carbon dioxide)

Works by displacing the oxygen and replaces it with carbon dioxide, smothering the fire.

Fire Hose

Works by reducing heat to below the fuel's ignition point and displaces oxygen. This is a very large Type A Fire Extinguisher.

Type ABC Fire Extinguisher (Dry Chemical)

Works by smothering the fire and not allowing oxygen to interact with the heat and fuel source.

Firebreak (forest fires)

This is a deliberate and intentional separation by clear-cutting and removing all vegetation in a path surrounding a fire. This method works by removing the fuel source from the Fire Tetrahedron.





Fire safety at home and school

Now that you understand what fire is and how it works, let's look at some items for staying safe should a fire occur.

Fire Alarms

If you are in school, home or out at the movies, know and understand the warning indicators of a fire alarm. (i.e. loud siren and/or a flashing white light)

Exits

Know your exits. Should an alarm signal find the nearest exit and leave the area immediately.

Practice

At school, take part in fire evacuations from the building and when home develop a plan for evacuation with your family. Practice how you would leave your house and where a safe location is to meet up.

Prevent Fires

Just by knowing the three core ingredients of fire you can recognize hazards before they cause a fire. You should report these hazards to an adult or your parents.

For example:

- ▶ A broken light bulb, outlet or switch.
- ▶ Embers from a fireplace that have fallen onto a carpet.
- ▶ A grease filled pan from cooking french fries that is getting too hot on the stove.

Fire Extinguishers

Know where fire extinguishers are located. If you don't have one in your home, encourage your parents to get one. Train on how to properly use it should you need to.

Remember the Acronym **PASS**.

- ▶ **P**ull - the pin on the extinguisher.
- ▶ **A**im - the nozzle at the base of the fire.
- ▶ **S**queeze - the handle to release the product.
- ▶ **S**weep - the nozzle side to side slowly across the fire.



CALL FOR HELP!

If a fire becomes too large to manage or you are unsure of what needs to be done, exit immediately to safety and call for help. Dial 911 or the local fire station.

Knowing when to safely escape is just as important as knowing how to prevent and stop fires.





Tick Awareness

HEALTH FACT
 The Center for Disease Control (CDC) lists **16 DISEASES** caused by ticks in the United States.

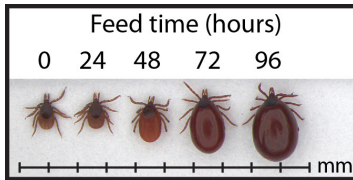
WHAT ARE TICKS?

Ticks are arachnids, like spiders, scorpions, and mites. They have been around for millions of years and there are approximately 900 different species of ticks today. Depending on species and stage of life cycle, ticks can be extremely small and difficult to see. Most ticks progress through three life stages: egg, six legged larva, eight-legged nymph, and adult. At each stage of life ticks must obtain a blood meal from a host animal.

Although ticks are not typically born infected, they do carry and pass disease from one host animal to another. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) lists 16 diseases caused

by ticks in the United States, including Lyme, Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis, Ehrlichiosis, and Powassan Disease. Every year the CDC reports tens of thousands of new cases of tick-borne disease in the United States.

Ticks will position themselves on a blade of grass with their legs outstretched waiting for a potential host to brush past. Ticks have organs on their legs which help them detect odors related to their hosts. Several things are thought to attract ticks to a host, such as physical contact, shadows or movement, chemical makeup of a potential host, and even the CO2 exhaled by animals.



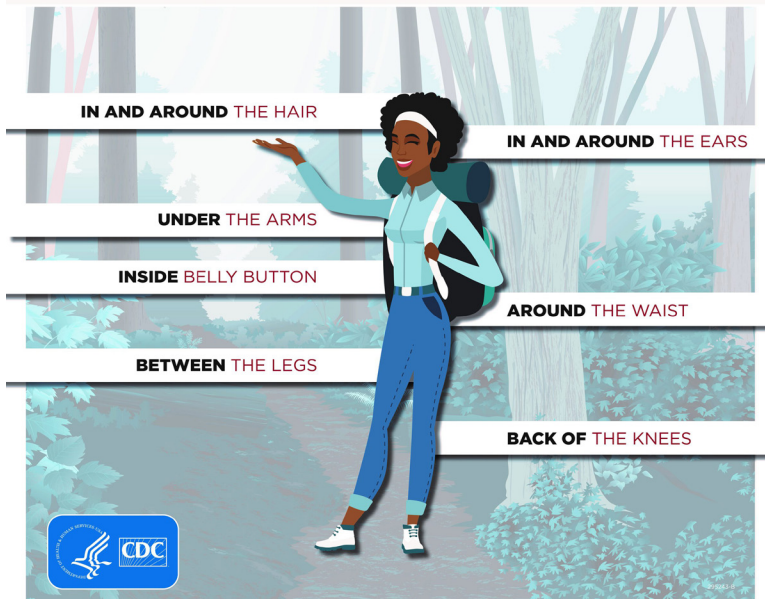
Stages of Tick Engagement

Photo at left demonstrates the stages of engagement in a nymphal blacklegged tick over a period of 96 hours.

Source: CDC.gov

Check your clothing and body for ticks after being outdoors in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas where ticks live!

CHECK THESE PARTS OF YOUR BODY AND YOUR CHILD'S BODY FOR TICKS:



Tick Bite Prevention Tips

- ▶ Long clothes preferable
- ▶ Tumble dry clothes on high for 10 minutes to kill ticks
- ▶ Avoid areas known to harbor ticks like grassy, brushy woods
- ▶ Examine pets
- ▶ Limit shady areas in your yard
- ▶ Keep yards clear of leaf litter and wood debris
- ▶ Create borders between woods and yard areas
- ▶ Use mulch or pea gravel for borders, ticks do not like to cross these barriers
- ▶ Wear light colored clothing
- ▶ Perform tick checks



Arson prevention in vacant buildings

Did you know that the majority of fires involving vacant buildings are a result of intentional actions? There are tens of thousands of vacant residential and nonresidential building fires every year in the United States, resulting in hundreds of deaths and injuries, and millions of dollars in property damage. The firefighters responding to these incidents account for many of these injuries.

Improperly maintained vacant buildings may become temporary shelter for homeless individuals or sites for illegal activity. These structures are often unsafe for human occupancy or in danger of partial or complete collapse. The combination of unknown structural conditions, and the potential for occupants inside these buildings, presents a significant danger to firefighters when responding to a fire.

Not only are fires in vacant buildings more likely to be intentionally set, they are also more likely to spread to neighboring buildings. Often times these properties become dumping grounds adding more combustible material to the building, and because they are not occupied, the fire can be much further along before it is noticed and reported to the fire department.

New York State Fire Code requires that all vacant buildings are secured, emptied of all combustible waste and hazardous material, and in many cases, owners must

maintain fire protection features such as fire alarms, sprinkler systems, and standpipe systems in operational condition. In addition, any unsafe vacant building must have signs affixed to the exterior displaying symbols that inform firefighters of the hazardous conditions.

Never enter a vacant or abandoned building, and report conditions such as unsecured doors and windows, accumulated trash and debris, hazardous materials or conditions, or indications of criminal activity. Your local code enforcement or building department can assist you with addressing these hazards in your neighborhoods.

SAFETY FACT

Not only are fires in vacant buildings more likely to be intentionally set, they are also more likely to spread to neighboring buildings.



Warm weather brings pest activity



Finally! The days are getting longer, the afternoon sun is stronger, the snow is melting and everything is beginning to stir with the first signs of Spring. Unfortunately, this includes the return of many insect pests that we'd all rather live without. Paper wasps, yellow jackets and other stinging insects will all make their way back into our buildings soon enough. Why does this occur, and what can we do about it?

an established colony would.

Every year, the majority of wasps and yellow jackets in any given nest die off at the first hard frost. A certain number of them, however, are queens, which survive the cold temperatures of the winter by going dormant in a protected area. Often, this protected area is a south or west facing wall of a building. They leave the nest before the hard frost, and find cracks and gaps around windows and door frames that allow them access to the interior wall void, where they bide their time until it warms up. The longer days and warming temperatures of March will allow these queens to emerge from dormancy. Any light they can see is, to them, the way out. Therefore, they frequently emerge inside, instead of outside, the building. Although there are no nests large enough at this time of the year, when emergence of the queens happens, it can seem as though there must be a nest nearby. In reality, you are dealing with a number of independent queens, who have not yet established a nest, and do not act together cooperatively as worker wasps in

Even though this is the case, each queen is capable of defending herself by stinging multiple times. It is best to leave stinging insects alone, and do not provoke them. If the weather is warm enough, try turning off the lights in a room, and then open one window and its window shade. The insects should be attracted to the light and may find their way out on their own. Notify an adult any time you are stung by insects.

The emergence of a significant number of wasp queens inside of a building is an indication that there are cracks, gaps and crevices that allow them access to the interior wall voids. To address the emergence of wasps inside of a building in the Spring, proper preventative maintenance is required. Seal up the gaps, cracks and crevices around window frames and soffit areas in the summer. Address and remove existing stinging insect nests throughout the summer months to reduce the number of stinging insects present in the area. Develop a system of communication between you and your pest management professional.

SAFETY TIP

To address the emergence of wasps inside of a building in the Spring, proper preventative maintenance is required.





SAFETY TIP

Designate an outside meeting place that is a safe distance from the house where everyone should meet.

Keep Your Family Fire Safe – Make an Escape Plan

Once a smoke alarm sounds, fire can spread quickly leaving only minutes to escape. That is why it is so important to have a home escape plan.

Start by drawing a map for your home and follow these NFPA guidelines:

- ▶ Plan two ways to get out of each room
- ▶ Make sure all doors and windows leading outside are easily opened
- ▶ Identify secondary routes like a window onto an adjacent roof or a collapsible ladder from upper-story windows
- ▶ Never use the elevator in a fire, always use the stairs
- ▶ Designate an outside meeting place that is a safe distance from the house where everyone should meet

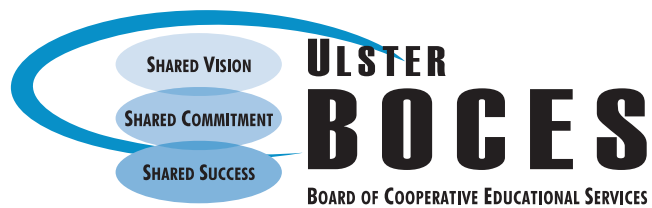
NFPA indicates that 71% of Americans have a home fire escape plan but only 47% have practiced it. Practice your fire drill with everyone in the house at night and during the day, twice a year.

When practicing your fire drill remember to:

- ▶ Practice exiting your house with your eyes closed, crawling on the floor, keeping your mouth covered
- ▶ Make sure you close doors behind you
- ▶ Know how to “stop, drop and roll” if your clothes catch on fire
- ▶ Practice testing door handles to see if they are hot before opening them
- ▶ Teach children not to hide during a fire but to escape on their own in case no one is nearby to help them



DUTCHESS  **BOCES**



This publication was designed and printed by the Orange-Ulster BOCES Communications and Public Relations Service.