

Appliance Safety

Appliance safety may be something that is easily overlooked. Take a look at our list of fire and life safety items regarding appliances!

GAS APPLIANCES

Ranges

- When lighting any match-lit burners or ovens, always light the match before turning on the gas. If the flame goes out, turn off the burner and let the gas disperse before relighting
- Clean away any grease, oil or debris from the area around burners to help prevent fires
- Never use water to put out a grease fire. Use baking soda, or if a fire is in a pan, smother the flames with a lid. A fire extinguisher in the kitchen is also recommended. The fire department should also be called to verify there was no extension of the fire (Town of Menasha Fire Department does not charge for this type of service)
- Move any flammable objects--towels, curtains, calendars--away from range burners and other hot surfaces

Ovens

- Never use your oven to heat your home. This misuse of your oven puts you at risk of burns from hot surfaces and shortens the life of oven parts & controls. Use only heaters that are designed for home heating and follow the manufacturer's operating instructions.

Water Heaters

- If your water heater is on an elevated platform, be sure that the platform can support the weight of the heater as well as the water inside it
- A temperature of 120°F is adequate for most household uses with minimal danger of scalding and maximum energy efficiency. Dishwashers require 140°F to properly disinfect and clean. Most dishwashers preheat the water to this temperature. If yours doesn't, lowering the water heater temperature is not recommended
- Do not store flammable materials--mops, brooms, laundry, newspapers--near your water heater
- Do not store combustible materials--paints, solvents, gasoline--in the same room or near your water heater

Furnaces

- Your furnace should be serviced once a year to help maximize its life--and performance
- Have your furnace checked for fire hazards such as damaged firebox and any dislodged, clogged, rusted or damaged vents
- Clean or replace your filter regularly, or after each month of heavy usage
- Replace the blower door cover after checking your filter
- Securely fasten the door that covers the pilot light and burner area

- Do not store combustible materials--paint, solvents, gasoline--in the same room or near your furnace
- Do not store flammable materials--mops, brooms, laundry, newspapers--near your furnace
- Air-supply vents throughout the house must be clear of obstructions. Furnaces need a constant supply of fresh air to run efficiently and safely
- Kerosene heaters and other nonvented heaters are not recommended for household heating and should only be used in a well-ventilated room. Always operate your heater according to the manufacturer's instructions

All gas appliances

- Make sure a flexible gas line connection is installed connecting the gas houseline (the gas pipe connecting your appliances to the gas meter) to the appliance to reduce the likelihood of damage if movement should occur
- You should have an appliance shutoff valve installed at each gas appliance that lets you turn off the gas to that appliance only if there is a gas leak or if the appliance needs to be replaced or serviced
- Do not store flammable materials--mops, brooms, laundry, newspapers--near gas appliances
- Do not store combustible materials--paint, solvents, gasoline--in the same room or near your appliances

ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

Appliance cords and power source

- Do not place electric cords under rugs or where they can be walked on or damage can go unnoticed
- Check for cords that are broken, frayed, damaged or tied in knots, or that have melted insulation. Have them repaired or replaced promptly but take it out of service immediately
- Use extension cords with three-pronged plugs for appliances that require grounding
- Insert and remove plugs by grasping the plug. Pulling on the cord could damage it. Be careful not to let fingers touch the metal prongs
- Don't overload a receptacle with too many appliances
- Be sure the receptacle can handle the amperage being plugged in
- Be sure that the branch circuit can handle the amperage being used by all receptacles on the branch

Appliances

- Never use electric appliances--radios (except small battery-powered ones), TV's, hair dryers--near sinks, toilets or bathtubs
- Always dry your hands before touching electric appliances
- Keep the floor around your washer and dryer clean and dry
- Unplug small appliances when washing them.

- Never immerse appliances in water--especially while cleaning them
- Replace appliance light bulbs with those of equal or lower wattage than that recommended by the manufacturer
- All electrical appliances and tools should have a label on them from an approved testing agency. If the appliances are not working correctly or if it gets wet, have it serviced as soon as possible to help minimize the chance of using it again.
- Check cords on appliances. If they are worn out, frayed, torn or cut, have them repaired.
- Don't overload receptacles.
- Be sure when using appliances on the counter that the cord is fully on the counter and out of the way of children who could pull them down on themselves.
- Storing items above the stove is not a good idea. Many people have been burned by reaching above the stove or items resulting in a pot or pan being bumped and the contents spilling and burning themselves and/or others around them.
- Turn pot handles so children can't pull them down (face the center of the stove)
- Keep chemicals locked up if they are stored in the kitchen. Make sure they have the proper label on them. Chemicals should be stored out of reach of children and they should also be stored separately from food. Store flammable liquids in a shed.
- Wear tight sleeves when cooking so you don't snag the handles on pots and pans and also so that the sleeves don't come in contact with the burners.
- Be sure to clean the oven and stove surfaces after each use to prevent a buildup of grease and dirt.
- Be sure to have a fire extinguisher in the kitchen
- Be sure that 'Pizza Ovens' and microwaves have room to 'breathe' around them as set forth in the owner's manual or users guide.

