Each year during the first full week of May, the U.S. Fire Administration and their partner agencies work to raise awareness of arson and provide strategies for combating it in communities across the country. This year the focus is on vehicle arson because that accounts for about 27% of total arson crimes each year.

According to the National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, revenge is the most common motive for an arsonist. A car may be viewed as an extension of the individual and it can become a very personal target for revenge arson. Other common motivations can include gang-related initiation activities or car-related debt that tempts the owner to stage a theft and ignite the vehicle.

Basic tips for preventing vehicle arson on your properties include the following:

- Maintain a well-lit parking area.
- Encourage tenants to close all windows and lock the doors and trunk.
- Remind tenants to never leave valuables in plain sight in their vehicle.

Should you note an abandoned or junked car sitting on your property, call Code Enforcement for the City of Spokane at 509.625.6083. If the car is on the street, a public right-of-way, call the Abandoned Auto hotline at 509.625.4246.

This logo created by the Department of Homeland Security and distributed through the U.S. Fire Administration should become an increasingly familiar sight. The message reminds us that we all play a firefighter’s role in preventing fire in our homes and businesses. Thank you for your continued partnership with Spokane Fire Department in helping to keep our community safe!
Reminder for Tenants:

- How to extinguish a kitchen grease fire by putting a lid over the pan and turning off the heat.
- Always keep a lid and a box of baking soda handy when cooking with grease.
- Older tenants may be aware of this information, but many teen and young adult cooks are not.
- Keep grills a safe distance from siding, eaves, wooden decks, and overhanging branches.
- Although grills account for only a small portion of cooking-related fires, propane grills on decks can dramatically accelerate any fire that starts on the exterior of a building.
- Investigate new technology that addresses the problem of cooking fires.
- For tenants who are part of the “higher-risk-for-cooking-fire” groups of college students or senior citizens, learn about the CookStop device that monitors movement in the kitchen and shuts off the stove when the cook leaves the room or falls asleep.
- More information can be found at www.cookstop.com.
- The Safe-T-elementTM replaces regular elements on stovetops, preventing stovetop fires because it automatically shuts off the stove when temperatures reach a maximum of 350°C or 662°F. For more information, visit www.wsafc.org/Lists/NewsArticles/DispForm.aspx?ID=2.

Studies Conducted by the NFPA and US Fire Administration:

- Unattended cooking is the single leading factor contributing to home fires.
- Males face disproportionate risk of a cooking fire injury relative to the amount of cooking they do.
- More than 50% of home cooking injuries occur when people try to fight the fire themselves.
- Although gas grills are used about 1.5 times as often as charcoal grills, they are involved in 5 times as many fires.
- More than one-third of residential cooking-fire fatalities occurred while the victims were sleeping.

Be Sure to Visit Our Website at spokanefire.org

There you will find links to our blog, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages!

Window Falls

It may come as a surprise, but falls rank as the number one cause of unintentional injury in Spokane County for children between the ages of birth and 14. Window falls are but one example of a potentially life-changing incident. With the approach of warmer weather, unprotected windows and screens present a particular danger to young children.

You can print the attached poster provided by SAFE KIDS Spokane to help remind parents of the fall dangers posed by windows. Bedrooms should be arranged to keep cribs and chairs completely away from windows. Window stops should be installed to keep youngsters from opening the window and tumbling outside. Care should also be taken to assure that window guards have an emergency release in the event of a fire.

You may also be interested in the story of a young Vancouver family still recovering from the consequences of a window fall.

Sign up for this monthly newsletter, ask a fire-related question or suggest a specific safety topic by contacting Jan Doherty at 509.625.7058 or jdoherty@spokanefire.org.
Install Window Guards and Stops
Screens are meant to keep bugs out, not children in. Properly install window guards to prevent unintentional window falls. For windows above the first floor, include an emergency release device in case of fire. Install window stops so that windows open no more than four inches.

Open Windows From the Top and Close After Use
If you have windows that can open from both top and bottom, make a habit of opening just the top to prevent accidental falls. Keep in mind that as kids grow, they may have enough strength, dexterity and curiosity to open the bottom. Keep windows locked and closed when they are not being used.

Keep Kids From Climbing Near Windows
For your crawlers and climbers, move chairs, cribs and other furniture away from windows to help prevent window falls.

Never move a child who appears to be seriously injured after a fall — call 911 and let trained medical personnel move the child with proper precautions.

Every year, more than 5,100 children in the U.S. younger than 18 years of age are treated in hospital emergency departments for injuries related to falls from windows.