



Burns also account for many home injuries every year. To avoid this common danger, Reese reminds everyone to “cook with caution.” Whether working on a stove or a grill, all chefs should remember to follow safety rules, move pot and pan handles out of the reach of children, keep a pan lid easily accessible to put out grease fires, never use too much lighter fluid on charcoal and never leave grills unattended.

Home improvement projects, including lawn and garden maintenance, can also lead to a variety of home injuries. With the popularity of home improvement projects growing, it is important to remember that not every project can be completed by the home owner alone.

“Before you start, you have to do the research and determine if the project is within your skill level,” Reese said.

If you do start a home improvement project that includes tools, it is important to read the manual for all the tools to ensure proper operation. Also, personal protective equipment (PPE) including eye and hearing protection should always be worn while operating any kind of machinery, whether power drill, saw or lawn mower.

“Every Soldier has PPE,” Reese said. “Remember to put it on at home just as you do at work.”

Keeping your home a haven from daily stresses is important especially in today’s fast-paced world. Identifying home hazards and taking the steps to mitigate the risks before anything tragic happens is a good way to keep your dwelling “home safe home.”

“There is life after work but if you have an accident at home because you were rushing or cutting corners, you are taking valuable time away from your friends, family and fun,” Reese said. “Remember, don’t take shortcuts, do your research, use a battle buddy and keep yourself safe at home.”

For more information about home safety, visit [www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org). For more information about the Army’s Safe Summer Campaign, visit <https://safety.army.mil>.

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## **SIDEBAR/INFO BOX**

### Home Safety Checklist

- Use bright lights at the top and bottom of stairs and make sure hallways and dark areas in the home are well-lit at night with nightlights.
- Install grab bars in the tub, shower and near toilets.
- Use a rubber bath mat or non-slip strips in the tub.
- Wipe up spills and splashed bathwater promptly.
- All stairs and steps need handrails along both sides, secured along the full length of the stairway.
- Keep stairs and pathways clear of clutter.
- In homes with babies and toddlers, use baby gates at the top and bottom of stairs.
- Check the setting of your water heater and make sure it’s set no higher than 120 degrees F.
- Install smoke alarms on each level of your home—especially in or near sleeping areas.
- Test each smoke alarm every month by pushing the test button until you hear a loud noise.
- Replace smoke alarm batteries with new ones at least once each year.
- Know how to escape a fire. Find two exits out of every room – the door and possibly a window. Choose an outside meeting place in front of the home. Practice your plan twice a year with all members of the family.
- Stay in the kitchen while food is cooking on the stove.
- Make sure an adult is in the room constantly while a candle is burning.
- Be sure to lock matches and lighters away from children.
- Know the national poison control center toll-free number – (800) 222-1222 – and keep the number by every phone in the home.

- Look around your home—under the sink, in the garage—for cleaning products and automotive fluids that say “Caution”, “Warning” or “Danger” on the label. Store these away from food, in locked cabinets out of sight and reach of children.
- Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poison you can’t see, smell or taste. CO is produced by fuel-burning appliances and equipment in your home. These need proper maintenance for safe use. Also install a carbon monoxide detector to alert you if the CO level becomes unsafe.
- Install child locks on all cabinets—especially where potentially harmful items are stored.
- Be sure cleaning products and other household substances have child-resistant closures.
- Keep all medicines and vitamins in original containers in a secure area—away from children.
- Store dangerous chemicals such as pesticides, automotive fluids and paint thinner in a secure locked cabinet.
- Always store gasoline in an approved container.

Source: [www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org)



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