

Unintentional Home Injury in the United States

Spring Lake Park-Blaine-Mounds View Fire Department and the Home Safety Council

Injury in the home is extremely common, accounting for approximately one-third of all injuries. The home is the second most common location of unintentional fatal injuries in the United States, with motor vehicles traveling on the road being the first. The home is the site of approximately 20% of all injury death. The top five leading causes of unintentional home injury death are falls, poisoning, fire/burn, choking/suffocation, and drowning; together these causes account for 90% of all unintentional home injury deaths. Yet the majority of unintentional home injuries do not result in death. For every home injury death there are approximately 650 nonfatal injuries. Children under age 5 and adults over age 70 are the highest risk groups for home injury, both fatal and nonfatal.

Injuries and Emergency Department Visits

- Between 1996 and 2000, an average of nearly 21 million medical visits was made each year due to home injuries.
- Between 1997 and 2001, an average of 12 million nonfatal unintentional home injuries were reported each year, with falls accounting for the majority of the injuries (5.1 million).
- The top five leading causes of nonfatal unintentional home injury are falls, struck by/against, cut/pierce, overexertion, and poisoning; these account for about 80% of all these injuries. Of these, falls account for 41.2% of all nonfatal unintentional home injuries.
- Between 1992 and 1999, on average, there were nearly 20,000 unintentional home injury deaths per year

Populations at Disproportionate Risk

- Children: An average of 2,096 children younger than 15 die each year as a result of an unintentional home injury.
- Older adults: Each year, an average of more than 7,000 adults age 65 and older dies from unintentional home injuries. The top five leading causes of these home injury deaths are falls, fire/burn, poisoning, natural/environmental.
- Individuals with Disabilities: An estimated 20% of adults and children in the United States live with at least one disability; however, little is known about home safety practices in households where an individual with a disability resides.

If the home is one of the most dangerous places to be, what can be done to make you and your family safer? The Fire Department is committed to preventing fire, injury and crime in your home. Invite a firefighter to your home to conduct a home safety survey. Together we look for potential hazards and give you simple prevention solutions. It is free, confidential and many free items are given. For your Home Safety Survey call 763-767-4003