

Summertime: Don't burn, baby, burn



By Barbara Lemos

Now that summer is in full swing, it's worth considering ways to keep you and your visiting family, friends and pets safe from fires. St. James is a Firewise Community, so we're committed to advancing property-owner safety and living in harmony with our natural surroundings.

Here's an A-to-Z list of simple steps to keep seasonal perils at a minimum. Perhaps these rhymes will motivate you to look around your home and yard for practical steps you can take to guard against fire risk.

August brings risks we should all think about.

Boats? Vent your engine before you head out.

Cigars, cigarettes? Please make sure that you snuff.

Dogs in hot cars, on hot porches? That's ruff!

Electrical storms lighting up the night sky,

Fireworks? Don't lose a hand or an eye!

Gasoline lawn mower? Cool to refuel,

Hoses, a most vital summertime tool.

Irrigate, moisten your mulch and your plants,

Jury-rigged lighting? Don't take that chance.

Kids run amok with their summertime games,

Lawn mowers, trimmers – keep far from hot flames.

Mulches like pine straw ignite and go poof,

Needles accumulate up on the roof.

Outlets have limits; don't overload.

Propane is dangerous and can explode.

Quiz family members; make up a home drill.

Remove dry debris (that takes minimal skill).

Sparklers, while fun, can still cause injury.

Tall tiki torches? Douse flames thoroughly!

Under-deck storage? Not flammable, please.

Vegetation — prune plants, shrubs, and trees.

Wood-burning fire pits? Don't walk away.

"X" marks the spot where extinguishers stay.

Yes, you can still have some summertime fun,

Zero problems — and now we're done!

***Editor's Note:** Barbara Lemos is a member of the TOSJ Firewise Committee. More comprehensive information on how to avoid fires is available at the Town Hall office.*



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