



VFW Post Insurance Program

Loss Control Article

Backyard Safety

Summer is fast approaching and along with it will no doubt come numerous outdoor activities and events. Now is the perfect time to be thinking about your Post's "backyard safety" plan.

Every year, thousands of injuries ranging from cuts and bruises to fractures and burns occur in the great outdoors. Most of these injuries are preventable. Below are some tips to help make your "backyard" a safer place for your members, your guests and their children.

Survey the Grounds

- Safely store all yard tools and power equipment in a locked area.
- To prevent falls, make sure there are railings around all decks or surfaces that are more than 30 inches off the ground.
- Remove all naturally occurring skin irritants or dermatitis-inducing agents such as Poison Ivy.
- Prevent plant-related poisonings by having only non-toxic plants on the grounds.
- Remove all dead branches that could break off in the event of a strong wind.
- Remove all dead branches or other debris on the ground.
- Check for potholes or protruding rocks that represent trip and fall hazards.
- Be sure parking lots, sidewalks and steps are free of hazardous breakup, damage and debris.

Barbeque Basics

- Make sure the grill, barbecue or propane tank is in an open area with no overhanging trees or branches. Rake leaves, twigs and other nearby flammable vegetation to create a 10-foot clear area around the barbecue. Use the 10-foot clearing as a boundary line that children cannot cross.
- Place a screen over the grill using non-flammable material with mesh no coarser than one-quarter inch.
- Make sure any backyard activities are conducted at a safe distance from the grill.
- Ensure there is adult supervision at all times and the adult in charge is keeping a close eye on the barbecue.

Food Safety

- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. At temperatures of 50 to 125 F, most bacteria can grow and some produce poisons that may cause illness.
- Try to have plenty of ice on hand and in the cooler to keep your food cold and safe all day.
- In hot weather (above 90 °F), food should never sit out for more than 1 hour.
- Keep everything clean including cooking surfaces and utensils.
- Separate raw foods from cooked--don't cross contaminate.

The summer months are about spending time outdoors with family and friends. It is your responsibility to provide a safe environment for your members and guests. If you would like additional information about how to protect your Post, call **The VFW Post Insurance Program** at (800) 829-8390.

The VFW Post Insurance Program is administered by Lockton Risk Services
P.O. Box 410679 | Kansas City, MO 64141
Tel: 800-829-8390 | Fax: 913-652-7599

vfwinsurance@locktonaffinity.com
www.vfwinsurance.com