

## **For Immediate Release**

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From: The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

### **Home Safety Month 2006: Hands On Home Safety**

According to the Home Safety Council, if you ask Americans where they feel safest, most will say their own home. However, unintentional injuries in the home result in nearly 21 million medical visits, on average, each year, and in 2004 in Branch, Hillsdale and St. Joseph counties, accidents accounted for nearly 40% of all deaths of persons un the age of 45. **It is the leading cause of death in our area for persons under 45.**

The Community Health Agency is promoting the month of June as Home Safety Month – to educate and empower both families and businesses to take actions that will make homes safe. We hope to bring attention to the serious problem of preventable home injuries and its leading causes: falls, poisonings and fires and burns.

Throughout Home Safety Month, we ask the public to consider their home's danger areas and take some simple steps to minimize their risk from potential injuries, or even death.

#### **Fires/Burns**

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home and in or near all bedrooms, and test the batteries at least once a month so you know they are working.
- Plan a home fire drill and practice it at least twice a year. Memorize the fire department's emergency telephone number.
- Use safety covers in electrical outlets and anti-scald devices in faucets in homes with young children.

#### **Falls**

- Make sure all porches, hallways and stairwells are well lit. Use the maximum safe wattage in light fixtures. (Maximum wattage is typically posted inside light fixtures.)
- Use a non-slip mat, or install strips or decals in bathtubs and showers.
- Install grab bars in bath and shower stalls.

#### **Poisonings**

- Keep medicines and household chemicals and cleaners up high, out of the reach of children, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Install a carbon monoxide detector near sleeping areas in the home.
- Put your poison control center number (1.800.222.1222) near every phone.

For more information Visit the Home Safety Resource Center at [www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org) to review and download free information, including posters, brochures, safety checklists and additional tips to help safeguard your family.

**For more local information on health related topics and health data, visit our web site at:**

[www.bhsj.org](http://www.bhsj.org)