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## MEDIA RELEASE – 2009

### PROTECT CHILDREN FROM FIRE THIS WINTER

Fire authorities are reminding Victorians it is vital for them to check hotspots around their home to keep children safe this winter.

Small children are often naturally curious about fire, and children under five are particularly vulnerable to injury and death in the event of a fire.

“We see all too often children under the age of one admitted to hospital for burns and scalds, and the injuries sustained are severe and long-lasting ones”, said CFA Manager Community Safety John Boal.

Mr Boal has reminded parents, guardians and carers to always keep matches, lighters and candles out of reach of children.

The CFA recommends that parents, guardians and carers check the following areas to prevent their children from suffering burns this winter:

#### **Kitchen**

- use stove guards and keep pot handles turned inwards so little hands can't grab them
- keep children out of kitchen when cooking and educate them on the dangers of hot surfaces

#### **Dining room and lounge room**

- never drink hot drinks with a child on your lap
- always use a fire guard around heaters and open fires to prevent young children touching hot surfaces and receiving contact burns
- use non-slip placemats instead of tablecloths - young children are able to pull on tablecloths, potentially dragging dangerous items off the table such as hot drinks

#### **Bathroom**

- hot water temperatures when bathing children should be around 36-38° C
- use tap covers so children cannot turn on the hot water during a bath

#### **General**

- keep matches and lighters well out of reach of children or lock them away
- if a child receives a burn or scald, stop the burning process by placing the affected area under cool, running water for 20 minutes and organise transport to the closest medical facility

More information on winter fire safety can be found at the campaign's official website, [www.homefiresafety.com.au](http://www.homefiresafety.com.au)

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