Burns are terrible injuries that can be extremely painful and disfiguring. More often than not, these burns can be prevented. Situations and objects that we come in contact with everyday can be the cause of these dreadful wounds.

One of the most common causes of burns in the home is tap water that is too hot. Tap water that is 140 degrees will produce a burn in less than five seconds. Water heaters should be set no higher than 130 degrees and bathroom water degrees. Before placing a child in a bath, it is extremely important to check the temperature of the water. Their skin is even more sensitive than that of an adult.

Another common cause of burns is cooking. These burns occur due to getting too close to the burner. When cooking, it is important to be sure to wear clothing with short sleeves. If long sleeves get too close to the burner, they can easily catch on fire. Reaching over the flame, whether wearing long or short sleeves, can cause a serious burn. This is why it is important to never do so or to never store any sort of treat over the stove that may tempt a child.

Grease fires can be extremely dangerous. When one occurs, it is best to slide the pan’s lid onto the pan and to turn off the heat. NEVER put water into the hot pan. Grease fires when in the oven, can be easily extinguished by closing the oven door and turning off the heat.

Burns to small children typically occur on the face. Being small, children tend to grab things that are too high for them to see and bring them closer. This can mean pulling a cup of hot liquid or even a pan full of hot grease. It is best to keep these objects out of reach and not use a tablecloth that could give the child something to grasp. Pan-handles, in general, should be kept turned in so that they will not accidentally be knocked over.

The best treatment for burns, unless they are severe, is to put the burn in cool water and leave it there for a few minutes. This will reduce the temperature and prevent the heat on the skin from burning the skin further. If the burn is severe, the victim should be kept warm and taken immediately to a hospital. If clothing catches on fire, STOP where you are, DROP to the ground and ROLL over and over until the flames are extinguished. If you have any questions please call Albany Fire Department Fire Prevention at 510-528-5775.