



Know · Learn · Connect

BURNS



TOOLKIT

BACKGROUND

With a vision for safer people and places, Injury Matters works to prevent and reduce the impact of injury and support those affected through education, support and advocacy. Through the Know Injury program, Injury Matters provides knowledge, training, resources, and networking opportunities for health professionals, local government, not-for-profit and community organisations to prevent injuries.

As part of the Know Injury program, this toolkit provides information, resources and guidance to support Local Governments, health and community professionals in increasing community awareness of the importance of burns prevention and correct first aid.

What is a burn or a scald?

A burn is an injury to the skin or other organic tissue primarily caused by heat or due to radiation, radioactivity, electricity, friction or contact with chemicals.(1)

A scald is a type of burn when hot liquids destroy some or all of the cells in the skin or tissue.(1)

How common are burns and scalds?

It is estimated that each year worldwide, over 180,000 people die due to a burn.(1)

In 2012, there were 794 fire, burns and scald-related deaths and hospitalisations, costing the Western Australia health system \$10 million.(2) These costs include presentations to emergency departments, hospital admissions, other medical visits, resources and emergency transport. The average cost of a fire, burn or scald injury was \$140,379.(2)

In 2012, in Western Australia, the highest rate of deaths and hospitalisation for fire, burns, and scald injuries were in the 0-4 age group.(2) Young children, men aged between 15-29 years, those living in remote WA, and Aboriginal people also had disproportionately higher rates of burns and scald injuries.(2)

Injuries from burns and scalds can result in long hospital stays, with most patients requiring acute care followed by extensive periods of rehabilitation and outpatient visits.(3) Survivors of severe burns can also experience long-term psychosocial consequences including depression, pain, grief and anxiety.(4)



PREVENTING BURNS AND SCALDS

How can burns and scalds be prevented?

The incidence of burns and scalds can be reduced by adopting a range of simple practices. Individuals can prevent and reduce the impact of burns and scalds by:

- Ensuring your hot water is delivered between 45 degrees and 50 degrees Celsius.
- Always testing the water temperature with your wrist or elbow before bathing a baby, toddler or young child.
- Keeping hot surfaces, cooking equipment, electrical cords, matches and other flammable materials out of reach of young children.
- Using safe electrical appliances and outlets, such as a working electrical safety switch and power boards with surge protectors.
- Having access to a first aid kit, fire blanket and fire extinguisher within the home. Implementing sun safety behaviours.
- Keeping all chemicals and poisonous substances in original containers and stored in a secured area.
- Installing and maintaining smoke alarms.
- Preparing and practising your bushfire survival plan if you live in a bushfire prone area.
- Calling triple zero (000) in an emergency.

Which organisations work to reduce the incidence of burns and scalds in WA?



Kidsafe WA is the leading independent not-for-profit organisation dedicated to promoting safety and preventing childhood injuries and accidents in Western Australia. Kidsafe conduct several activities aiming to prevent burns and scald injuries among children, including providing safety information via their [fact sheet](#), [video](#) and [safety demonstration house](#).

The Fiona Wood Foundation is an independent not-for-profit organisation that exists to reduce the devastation caused by the physical, psychological and social impacts of burn injury. The Fiona Wood Foundation has a range of community resources available for download from their [website](#) including information for first aid education, post-injury support, children's resources and general information.



Fiona Wood
Foundation



The Australian and New Zealand Burn Association (ANZBA) is the peak body for health professionals responsible for the care of the burn injured in Australia and New Zealand. ANZBA has some great [resources](#) available for burns prevention, particularly for younger children.

YOUR ROLE

What role do Local Governments have in preventing burns and scalds?

In addition to providing community members with a safe place to live, local governments have a responsibility to support the health of its residents. Burns and scalds can significantly affect the health of residents; therefore it is important that local governments communicate burns and scalds prevention and first aid messages within their community.

How can your Local Government or organisation get involved in preventing burns and scalds?

Located within this toolkit are a range of media templates and suggestions of activities that Local Governments can conduct to generate awareness of the incidence of burns and scalds and the importance of prevention.

ACTIVITY	
AWARENESS RAISING	National Burns Awareness Month in June is a great opportunity to increase your social media activity and share messages from the official Twitter account @BurnsAwareMonth.
	Use statistics on the local incidence of burns and scalds-related hospitalisations to raise awareness at events and on social media.
	Contact local radio stations or newspapers to promote burns prevention and first aid safety messages.
COMMUNITY	Display posters regarding burns safety and ensure there is safety equipment available at all facilities operated by your local government.
	Set up a stall in your reception area, local shopping centre or community event to distribute resources regarding burns prevention.
	Schedule a first aid training course for your community members to attend.
PARTNERSHIPS	Partner with your local Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) office to educate community members on local hazards and fire safety.
	Partner with Kidsafe WA to deliver a 'Keeping Kids Safe Workshop' for local playgroups.
	Work with local schools to incorporate burns prevention and first aid into their curriculum.

TEMPLATES

Digital media is a great channel to generate awareness within your community about the importance of conducting safe behaviours to prevent burns and scalds.

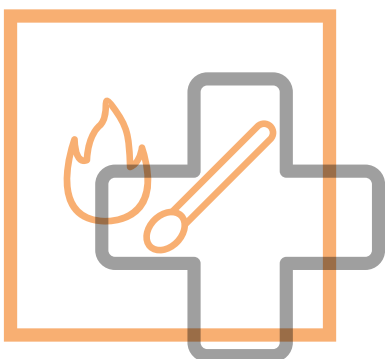
Over the next two pages, Injury Matters has provided social media templates and ideas for social media, blog topic ideas, and a media release for you to use to generate this awareness.



SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

1. We are supporting National Burns Awareness Month to raise awareness of burns prevention and correct first aid. What are you going to do to prevent a burn or scald this June? #burnsawareness
2. There is an increased risk of burns in the winter months as we start to heat our homes with fires, heaters, warm drinks and hot water bottles. Find out what you can do to keep your family safe this winter. #burnsawareness
3. Correct first aid after a burn or scald injury can make a huge difference in recovery times and the severity of scarring. Know how to REMOVE-COOL-COVER. #burnsawareness
4. Children aged 0-4 years have the highest rates of burn fatalities and hospitalisations. Don't let your family become a statistic. #burnsawareness
5. When is the last time you checked your first aid kit? Now is the perfect time to complete a stock take and ensure you have everything you need in case of a burn or scald. #burnsawareness

BLOG TOPICS



1. How to prevent burns and scalds within your home.
2. What to do if a family member experiences a burn or scald.
3. Where to buy fire safety equipment locally.

MEDIA RELEASE

Cool winter temperatures can bring burns risk.

A serious burn injury is for life. The scars can be both physical and psychological and may present life-long challenges. June marks National Burns Awareness Month, which provides an opportunity to increase awareness of burns prevention and correct first aid treatment.

Injury Matters' Chief Executive Sandy Lukjanowski said "It is important to be aware of how to prevent and treat burns as the weather cools. For those who experience a minor burn, immediate and correct first aid can have a huge impact on the severity of the injury".

[Insert local government] is committed to raising awareness of burns prevention during this year's National Burns Awareness Month.

[insert mayor/CEO name] advises that "there are some simple actions you can take in your home to reduce the chance of burns, including keeping kettles, jugs, teapots, appliance cords and saucepan handles away from the edge of surfaces, keeping matches and lighters securely out of children's reach and unplugging and storing hairdryers, straighteners and curlers securely."

"It's also important to know the correct first aid to give in the event of a burn as it can greatly reduce the recovery time" [he/she] noted. First aid for burns:

1. Remove all jewellery from around the burn area. Remove any clothing around the burn area unless it is stuck to the skin.
2. Cool the burn under cool running water for 20 minutes. This will stop the burning process which can continue for 2-3 hours if not cooled sufficiently.
3. NEVER use ice, oil, butter or ointments as this can further damage the skin.
4. Cover the burn loosely with a clean, damp lint-free cloth or dressing. This will reduce the chance of infection.

It is recommended that you seek immediate medical advice if the burn is: larger than a 20 cent coin on the face, hands, groin or feet deep or infected caused by chemicals or electricity or if signs of inhalation injury (blackening around mouth or nostrils, swelling of airways) are evident.

In an emergency call 000.



WHAT SUPPORT CAN INJURY MATTERS PROVIDE?

To assist you in communicating the prevalence of injuries in your local area, [Injury Matters](#) can provide you with data regarding the number of hospitalisations and fatalities within your local government or health region due to injury.

Located on [Know Injury's Knowledge Hub](#) are a number of fact sheets, resource kits and information to support health professionals conduct injury prevention activities. These tools can assist local government workers who are developing initiatives that aim to reduce the prevalence of burns and scalds in your local area.

Finally, Injury Matters have relationships with a number of external organisations who lead the way in reducing the incidence of injury in WA. If you are interested in partnering with other organisations to prevent burns and scalds or simply wish to find out what other work is being conducted to prevent burns and scalds please contact us so that we can assist you to locate this information.

Partner:



Department of Health



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CONNECT WITH US



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[@KnowInjury](https://twitter.com/KnowInjury)

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