



Winter 2012

# Smoke Signals

Indian Hills Fire Protection District

Serving the Citizens of Indian Hills Since 1947

## Roll Call

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Emery Carson

### Asst. Chief

Marc Rosenberg

### Fire Capt.

Scott Case

### EMS Capt.

Bob Fager

### Fire Lt.

Brian Kerby

### EMS Lt.

Matt Griffin

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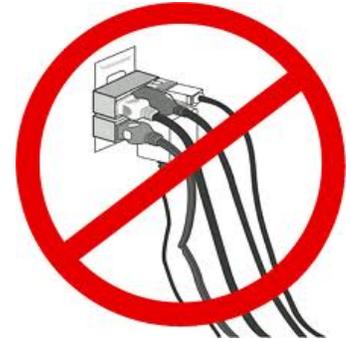
Anita Fritz

### Recording Secretary

Karen Nelson

## Electrical Fire Safety

Electrical failures and malfunctions account for more than 26,000 house fires in the US each year. But understanding basic electrical safety principles and following safe practices can help you protect your home and family.



- Routinely check electrical appliances and wiring. Replace all old, damaged, or worn cords immediately.
- Watch for warning signs of electrical problems such as outlets or switches that are warm or make crackling, sizzling, or buzzing noises.
- Do not use extension cords on a permanent basis and never use them with appliances, space heaters, or air conditioners.
- Avoid overloading circuits.
- Do not use light bulbs that exceed the recommended wattage of the light fixture.
- Replace any electrical tool that overheats, shorts out, gives off smoke, sparks, or causes even small electrical shocks.
- Avoid putting cords where they can be damaged or pinched by furniture, under rugs and carpets, or across doorways.
- Keep clothes, curtains, and other combustible items at least three feet from all heaters.
- Buy electrical products that have been evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory.
- Do not allow children to play around electrical appliances like space heaters, irons, and hair dryers.
- Never put a three-prong plug into a two-slot outlet or extension cord.
- Properly label all electrical panel circuits. Replace fuses and circuit breakers with the correct size and amperage.
- Unplug Christmas tree lights when leaving the house or going to bed.
- Hire a qualified electrician to do any electrical work or repairs.

Don't forget to regularly check the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors!

## Emergency Preparedness: A Guide to Help You

If you're looking for a resource for emergency preparedness, Jefferson County has a free document to help you. The *Jefferson County Emergency Preparedness Guide* is a comprehensive publication for citizens with information on how to prepare for natural and man-made disasters. Some of the helpful resources in this booklet include how to:

- Contact local fire departments and law enforcement offices
- Register your cell phone to receive 911 alerts in the case of an emergency
- Create a disaster response plan
- Handle basic medical emergencies
- Create defensible space around your home to protect against fire
- Assemble an emergency kit
- Keep your pets safe during disasters
- Respond to dangerous weather

Copies of the 64-page guide are available at the Indian Hills Post Office.

## 2013 Board Meeting Schedule

Indian Hills Fire Protection District Board meetings are open to the public. They will be held at 7 pm at the fire station on the following dates in 2013:

January 23  
February 27  
March 20  
April 24  
May 22  
June 26  
July 24  
August 28  
September 25  
October 23  
November 20  
December 11

## Winter Driving Tips

Those of us who live in Indian Hills certainly know that winter driving comes with its own set of challenges. Following the three "P's" — prepare, protect, and prevent — can make tackling snow and ice a little less hazardous.

### ***Prepare***

Start by winterizing your car to make sure that all parts are in good working order. Check your tire tread and consider installing snow tires and carrying chains. Make sure that your windshield wipers are in good condition and that you have a windshield scraper and snow brush at all times. Also, carry your cell phone with you whenever you travel. Assemble an emergency kit in the event that you get stranded or your car breaks down. Items to include are a flashlight with extra batteries, water, snacks, warm winter clothing, blanket, shovel, distress flag/flares, sand or road salt, emergency reflectors, and jumper cables.

### ***Protect***

Always wear your seatbelt and make sure that all passengers are safely secured as well. Keep your gas tank full. Plan your route ahead of time and let others know where you're going and an estimated arrival time. Choose main roads and avoid lesser traveled shortcuts. Travel in daylight if possible since it's easier to see icy patches and other road hazards during the day.

### ***Prevent***

The easiest way to prevent crashes is by decreasing your speed. Also, increase the distance between cars to give you more time to react should you need to brake or swerve suddenly.

## Chimney Care

Many residents in Indian Hills have wood burning stoves, pellet stoves, or fireplaces. While all are an excellent heat source, proper chimney care is required to avoid a chimney fire.

Creosote is the main cause of chimney fires. If it builds up in sufficient quantities and ignites inside the chimney flue, the result can be a volcanic chimney fire. To minimize creosote:

- Have your fireplace or woodstove inspected and/or cleaned annually.
- Burn only seasoned woods.
- Do not burn trash or debris in a fireplace or woodstove.
- Do not allow the fire to smolder.

Other tips for safe burning include keeping the area around the hearth clear of all combustibles, using a metal mesh fireplace screen, never leaving a fire unattended, and ensuring that the chimney flue is never obstructed.



## Keep Your Vents Clear

Make sure that you check your exterior vents for your natural gas furnace and hot water heater regularly to avoid problems in the winter months.

The outside vents need to be clear of snow and ice at all times to avoid the potential for dangerous indoor natural gas buildup, which can happen if vents become plugged when ice and snow melt during the day and refreeze at night.

Also, make sure you keep the entire meter assembly clear since accumulated snow can prevent the meter from operating properly by stopping the flow of natural gas. If you notice ice on your meter or are concerned that the meter's regulator vent may be blocked, call Xcel Energy at 1-800-895-2999.

## A Big Thank You for the Big Chili!

Beautiful weather and an abundance of good chili resulted in a very successful Big Chili event in September. Indian Hills Fire Rescue received \$6,300 in proceeds, which will be used to purchase a CO pulse oximeter to help detect carbon monoxide poisoning in patients. Indian Hills firefighter Aaron Ratke placed third in the Combat Challenge event in his first year participating. Thank you to all who attended and helped make the event such a big success.

## CONTACT US

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**Indian Hills Fire Rescue**

**P.O. Box 750**

**Indian Hills, CO 80454**

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***Chief's Corner***

## **Concerned about Wildfire in Indian Hills?**

**Please come to a kickoff meeting to organize a community-wide wildfire mitigation project on January 14 at 7 pm at the fire station.**

Due to the extremely dry weather conditions over the last several years, wildland fires are now a year-round concern. While wildfire is inevitable in our environment, it does not have to destroy our homes or put our lives at risk. The meeting will discuss what has been done, what still needs to be done, and what resources are available to draw upon. There is much that we can do as individuals and as a community to mitigate the risk.

Please come to the meeting and bring your questions and suggestions. Let's all work together to prevent Indian Hills from becoming another Waldo Canyon.

I hope everyone has a safe and joyous holiday and a prosperous new year.

Chief Emery Carson