



# FIRE & BURN PREVENTION NEWS

WINTER 2011

## A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

B. DANIEL DILLARD,  
CHAIRMAN ABA PREVENTION COMMITTEE

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Teaching - Care - Research - Rehabilitation - Prevention - these are the five spheres of expertise of the American Burn Association. Clearly, North American burn centers are blessed with some of the most competent, caring and skilled teachers and caregivers that can be found in any medical setting in the world. And research on pain-free treatment, infection control and scar reduction management by ABA members is cutting edge. But how well versed are our burn center teams on Prevention? Really?

That is a question the ABA Prevention Committee intends to

answer. After all, Prevention is the one sphere within the ABA in which ALL members can and should participate. A prior assessment (Lehna, C., & Meyers, J. (2010) *JBCR*, 31(1), 111-120) of nurses have disclosed that this population believes that it is very important for them to provide prevention education to patients and patient family members. In that same assessment, however, they rated their competence in providing this information as low.

In the coming months, the Prevention Committee will quantify this knowledge and experiential deficit by means of a

"Burn Prevention Knowledge & Practices Assessment" of burn center team members. The assessment tool was created by Janet Cusick Jost, RN, MSN and has been refined and modified by team members: Ernest Grant, RN, MSN; Karla Arhns Klas, RN, BSN, CCRP; Annette Matherly, RN; Sue Jane Smith, RN, MSN; and Phillip Tammaro, FF.

All members of burn center teams are encouraged to complete the assessment. Information harvested from this study will be used for future ABA programming including a potential post graduate prevention course conducted at an ABA Annual Meeting.

## JUVENILE FIRESETTER NATIONAL DATABASE

A current hot topic in the realm of juvenile firesetting is the notion of creating a juvenile firesetter national database. A juvenile firesetter national database would be a collection of information about youth who have intentionally used fire inappropriately. In order to collect this information, it is necessary that the person or agency who encountered the firesetter report him or her to the state's juvenile justice system so that there is

an official record of the incident that can later be put into a national database. In order to be applicable, the national database should reflect demographic information about the firesetter such as age, gender and ethnicity, and perhaps information about any preexisting medical condition, family status (e.g. broken home, abuse), and academic performance. It should also include descriptive information about the fire itself such as the loca-

tion of the incident, ignition source, scale of damages, and any injuries or deaths incurred.

*The information in the national database should reflect several factors about the firesetter as well as information about the fire itself.*

The subject of such a database was addressed at a panel discussion entitled, *National Juvenile Database - Is It Needed? Can It Be Done?* at the 43<sup>rd</sup> annual American Burn Association Meeting this past March. Panelists included Dave Gullede, Data Unit Manager of the Oregon Office of the State Fire Marshal; Paul Schwartzman, M.S. from Finger Lakes Regional Burn Association; Martin King, Assistant  
*continued on pg. 5*

## BURN EPIDEMIOLOGY SIG APPROVED BY ABA FOR 2012

A new Special Interest Group (SIG) with potential relevance for fire/burn injury prevention specialists has been established within the American Burn Association. The recently approved Burn Epidemiology SIG will convene formally for the first time at the 2012 annual meeting in Seattle.

Burn prevention advocates are often hampered by the lack of credible data to plan and evaluate their prevention initiatives. The rationale for prevention programs is often contingent upon accurate baseline data. This new SIG provides a forum to discuss how data and statistics, studies in other areas, and national surveys can be correctly cited in presentations and grant funding applications.

The initial goal of the SIG will be to obtain consensus on a one-page, annually updated fact sheet presenting credible estimates for basic fire/burn death and injury statistics.

Since there is no single reliable nation-

al health statistics database, the consensus sheet will require blending fire and burn injury data and statistics from several sources, including the National Burn Repository, NIH, CDC, etc. The process through which informal consensus on the ABA's 2012 fact sheet was reached will be presented at the April 23 meeting.

The SIG could potentially develop into a year-round electronic "clearing house" for ABA members, staff and the media, with respect to questions on burn statistics not addressed in the ABA's National Burn Repository.

Over the past 15 years, ABA fact sheets reflect a decline in total burn injuries, posing a special challenge for burn epidemiologists. This apparent decline may be the result of our interventions as prevention educators, safety messages by the media, or safer consumer products. The decline could also represent non-prevention based sociological factors such as

*The meeting of the new Burn Epidemiology SIG has been scheduled for Monday April 23, 3:00-5:00 pm at the ABA convention (see page 6).*

smaller family size or the consumption of food and beverages away from the home. The new SIG will address these and other important questions relevant to burn injury prevention.

If you have suggestions to help guide its inaugural agenda, please share your concerns and potential agenda items in advance with Peter Brigham, the SIG's initial coordinator, at [pabrigham@gmail.com](mailto:pabrigham@gmail.com).

*Peter Brigham, MSW*

## FIRE AND BURN PREVENTION EDUCATION FOR HARD TIMES

*"We don't have the budget to do prevention education."*

*"We don't have the manpower to do prevention education."*

*"We know prevention is a worthy goal, but—"*

Stop us if you've heard this before.

Ironically, there is often plenty of attention, money and time paid *after* a tragedy that could have been prevented. But the reality is, as the media trumpets the latest crisis (economic, political, meteorological), as budgets are slashed and staff are laid off, it becomes even harder to make prevention a priority.

Budgets are unlikely to be restored in the near future. New hires for public education, prevention and safety also seem a distant dream. As for the media—it's never going to change. Rather than hope that things will improve, how can we get effective prevention education out there today?

By giving people—teachers, fire services, parents and others—resources that are easily accessible, can be used effectively in whatever amount of time is available without special training, are culturally appropriate and relevant for the target audi-

ence, and free or low-cost. Here's how we have kept all of these principles in mind when designing or choosing programs:

**Accessible.** Rather than bemoan the fact that attention is usually (if only temporarily) paid to fire and burns only *after* they have occurred, we designed a program that could take advantage of this brief teachable moment as well as help teachers who, whether they are prepared or not, must deal with the questions and fears raised in children when a peer has a fire at home.



*continued on pg. 4*

## 2012 ABA BURN PREVENTION POSTER CONTEST

### Calling all members of the burn team!

Here's your chance to increase awareness of burn hazards or prevention messages. Three monetary awards in the amounts of \$500, \$300, or \$200 will be awarded to the top three posters. All awards are paid to the Institutions represented. Winners will be announced during the ABA Annual Meeting in Boston.

### Contest Details/Poster Themes

Posters may address scalds, any single burn or fire prevention problem, a specific population, or multiple etiologies. Posters will be evaluated according to the following criteria: originality of the idea, creativity, quality of the verbal and graphic message, the immediate clarity and positive tone of the message the poster conveys, as well as composition, and other elements of design.

Poster abstract forms in Word format must be completed and returned by **January 16, 2012**.  
Late entries will not be accepted.

To obtain a poster abstract form, go to  
[www.ameriburn.org/preventionNews.php](http://www.ameriburn.org/preventionNews.php)

Contact: Curtis Ryun, RN [CRyun@LHS.org](mailto:CRyun@LHS.org)



2011 First Place Winner

Desiree L. Jimenez, EMT-B and Shellie Mason, MS, NP-C  
The Children's Hospital Burn Center, Aurora, CO

### POSTER CONTEST RULES

Please read this page carefully and completely before you start your poster! If the poster does not meet all the judging criteria, the poster will not be judged or displayed.

- The poster must relate to burn or fire prevention.
- Total poster size will be 18 X 24 inches and laminated (**No FOAM backing**).
- Posters and CD will not be copyrighted.
- All posters must be original work. It is the responsibility of the entrant to adhere to all copyright laws.
- It is the responsibility of the entrant to obtain and retain written photo consent from each person depicted in the poster and to forward the original of said consent to the ABA Central Office and a copy to the poster chair.
- If the content (both verbal and graphic) of the poster portrays any illegal activity, it will be automatically disqualified.
- If an institutional logo is included, the logo or other acknowledgements should be placed in the lower left hand corner of the poster. Printing should not exceed 18 point type, and should be confined to a 2 x 4 inch space. Names of institutions and/or organizations should not appear in poster text.
- Any person, institution, organization or poster that does not comply with the poster rules and requirements will be disqualified on submission and will not be eligible for display.
- The poster shall not have been previously published or presented at a national conference. (It may have been presented at an ABA-endorsed regional meeting.) The poster shall not be displayed or presented in any other format at this current ABA Meeting.
- One CD version of the poster in **PowerPoint** format must be mailed to the Poster Contest Chair and received no later than **February 16, 2012**. These CDs become the property of the ABA. Be sure not to miss the display of entries!
- Posters are to be taken to the Burn Prevention Booth by Tuesday at 5 pm and taken down on Thursday morning by 12:00 noon. If the posters are not picked up by the designated time, we are not responsible for their return.
- Posters will be displayed at the ABA Prevention Booth at the 2012 Annual Meeting. Posters will be judged by members of the ABA Burn Prevention Committee with ribbons placed on the three winning posters.

## PREVENTION EDUCATION FOR HARD TIMES

*continued from pg. 2*

In “After the Fire: The Teachable Moment,” we suggest age-appropriate books and discussion questions to help the class process the event, followed by classroom and take-home activities and further reading that teach children how to prevent a fire from happening in their own home and what to do if a fire does occur.

**Easy to use.** In helping to design a fire safety program for preschool- and kindergarten-age children, members of the Prevention 1st team worked with early childhood educators to create activities that were age-appropriate and helped teachers meet requirements for word recognition, comprehension, vocabulary and other learning standards. The result, the award-winning *play safe! be safe!* multimedia program, can be used “straight out of the box” in brief lessons that

can fit into any classroom schedule.

**Culturally appropriate.** For our video “Home Fire Drill: Does Your Family Know What to Do?” we recruited families living in city neighborhoods—like those most often affected by fires in our community—to test their home escape plans under realistic conditions. The results let our audience “see themselves” and realize they too might not be as prepared as they thought, encouraging them to both plan and practice a home fire drill.

**Free or low cost.** Given the budget cuts facing virtually all community organizations—from school systems to fire departments—there’s little point in designing an effective program that is unaffordable. One major key to affordable distribution is partnerships. “After the Fire: The Teachable Moment” is

made available to teachers in our community with the facilitation of the local Red Cross, and is also available as a free download from our website. With underwriting from BIC Corporation, *play safe! be safe!* is distributed free through nationwide workshops and is otherwise available for only the cost of shipping and handling.

Robert E. Cole, PhD  
Carolyn E. Kourofsky,  
Prevention 1st

**Resources named in this article are available from:**  
[www.prevention1st.org](http://www.prevention1st.org)  
[www.homefiredrill.org](http://www.homefiredrill.org)  
[www.playsafebesafe.com](http://www.playsafebesafe.com)

## SUCCESSFUL INITIATION OF RECALL OF GEL FUEL CANDLES

A TEAM EFFORT

During the month of August, the University of Iowa Hospital burn unit admitted three patients who received burns while using a gel fuel candle. Candles that use gel fuel are known as fire pots. Two patients (20% and 14% TBSA) were refueling the candle. Both had thought the candle’s flame had been extinguished prior to adding additional fuel. The third patient (9.5% TBSA) was sitting around an ignited gel fuel candle with friends when the candle spontaneously exploded sending the gel fuel many feet in the air and landing on the patient. The first two patients required surgery. All three patients were intubated on arrival to the burn unit.

Recognizing the danger of the gel fuel candles, Lori Roetlin, our burn unit social worker, contacted the Iowa state Fire Marshall, Ray Reynolds. He began

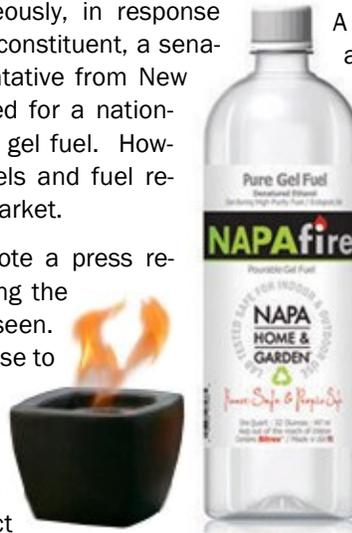
an investigation and discovered that other injuries with the candles had been reported previously (37 in all). These injuries led to the recall of the large gel fuel containers marketed by a single company (Napa) in June of 2011. Simultaneously, in response to an injury to a constituent, a senator and representative from New York, jointly called for a nationwide recall of all gel fuel. However, other models and fuel remained on the market.

Mr. Reynolds wrote a press release summarizing the injuries we had seen. He sent the release to state wide media. Shortly following the release, Consumer Product

and Safety Commission (CPSC) recalled gel fuel marketed by eight companies (one company pulled out of the withdrawal). The withdrawal was made public by the Associated Press, Washington Bureau.

A press release can be written by anyone. Partnering with the local or state Fire Marshall can provide additional assistance to physicians interested in burn prevention. We believe the press release played a role in the expanded withdrawal of the gel fuel. Unfortunately, these items can still be purchased on line. I guess another press release is in order!

Lucy Wibbenmeyer, MD  
University of Iowa Hospitals  
and Clinics



## JUVENILE FIRESETTING

*continued from pg. 1*

Chief from West Allis Fire Department; and Detective John Lowman, Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist from the Highland Park Police Department. Each panelist shared important information regarding the benefits and challenges that a national database would produce.

All panelists agreed that a national database would be valuable for identifying trends in juvenile firesetting and would provide great advantages to law enforcement and the fire services. Some of those advantages include helping identify juveniles at risk of firesetting behaviors, recommendation of national codes and standards, and focused research and public education efforts (Gulledge). The database could also assist with emergency planning and provide quicker response times to arson. Such planning could help prevent injuries, damages, or even deaths. In addition, it would allow for better tracking of repeat offenders who have relocated, and better surveillance of neighborhoods that are at high risk for firesetting incidents. Schwartzman argues that a database might even provide a “conceptual framework to explain firesetting behavior,” which would be invaluable to firesetter interventionists.

On the other hand, a juvenile firesetter national database faces a number of challenges. Gulledge points out that while the Oregon State Fire Marshall currently has its own online database in place, it would be difficult to create a uniform system across all fifty states, because laws vary from state to state. According to King, most law enforcement agencies agree that a national database would be advantageous; it is difficult to determine if it “should be just a database with basic identifiers, or a tracking mechanism, or both” once it crosses state lines. Furthermore, it is challenging to get participation in such a system as it relies on the law enforcement personnel to enter the data, and that may not be done consistently.

Another controversy related to a juvenile firesetter national database revolves around the issue of juvenile privacy. Due to this issue alone, Lowman is doubtful that such a database would ever come into existence, claiming that state police in Illinois are not legally permitted to send information related to juveniles to the FBI, and would therefore definitely not be permitted to publish juvenile information in a public or private database. Further, the risk of exposing a juvenile’s privacy may

deter parents from willingly referring their children to organizations that offer beneficial intervention services.

A possible solution to the various problems of a national database is an anonymous system that tracks trends in juvenile firesetting without revealing a juvenile’s personal information. Lowman contends that a national database should only include demographic information related to the juvenile and the incident (e.g. ethnicity, gender, location, ignition source), but no personal identifiers. Such a system would be most useful as a database of trends, and could not be used as a mechanism to track individual firesetters.

King feels that the best formula for creating a juvenile firesetter national database would be to determine which state has the most effective system, and then adapt that system so that it could be reproduced across the country. In this case, perhaps personal identifiers would be maintained only at the state level and then removed from the national database to protect juveniles’ privacy, while information about firesetting trends would remain.

*Fabianne Furman, Community Outreach Specialist/Juvenile Firesetter Interventionist, Burn Institute*

## NATIONAL SCALD PREVENTION CAMPAIGN

As you have heard over the last couple of years, five national organizations — the International Association of Fire Fighters Burn Foundation, the American Burn Association Burn Prevention Committee, the Federation of Burn Foundations, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the Home Safety Council (now merged with Safe Kids Worldwide)—have joined forces to create the National Scald Prevention Campaign.

*For more information,  
please visit  
[www.iafffoundation.org](http://www.iafffoundation.org)*

This Campaign is an innovative national program designed expressly to help fire and life safety educators, burn clinicians, and injury prevention professionals reach all adults with life-saving information they need to prevent scalds in and around their homes. It focuses on the high risk population 0–4 years of age and the senior population. This program was developed with your assistance and feedback, guided

by the National Scald Prevention Campaign Steering Committee. The toolkit was designed in such a way that you may brand it as your own. In the next couple of weeks you will receive this toolkit in the mail. An online resource center for the National Scald Prevention Campaign will be coming in the next couple of months as well.

*Tony Burke  
IAFF Burn  
Foundation*



## The ABA Prevention Committee

The Burn Prevention Committee is charged by the American Burn Association (ABA) to provide leadership in the area of burn prevention; gather and disseminate information related to burn awareness, prevention, and survival; assist in the development of burn prevention programs on the local, regional, national and international levels; and to serve as a resource to members and affiliated organizations in the field of burn prevention. Members of the Committee are selected and appointed by the President of the ABA from within its general membership. They are credentialed as burn care support professionals, public safety professionals, education specialists and corporate and non-profit managers. The focus of the committee's work is in North America.

[www.ameriburn.org/prevention.php](http://www.ameriburn.org/prevention.php)

If you have an interesting article, idea, or opinion for the next issue of the ABA Fire & Burn Prevention Newsletter, please contact Scott Cohen at [scohen@burnfoundation.org](mailto:scohen@burnfoundation.org)

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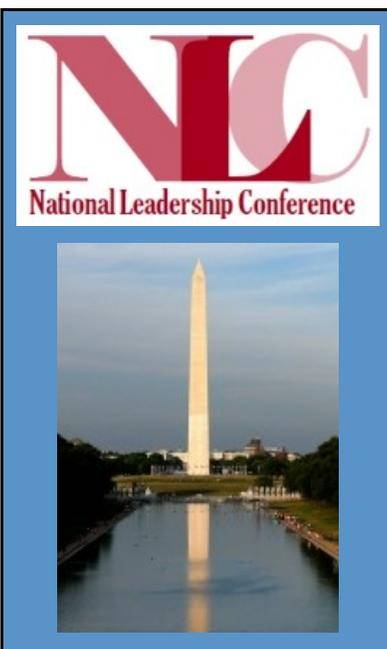
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## EVENTS COMING UP...

### ABA Burn Quality Consensus Conference and National Leadership Conference

February 7–9, 2012  
Washington, DC

[www.ameriburn.org/2012NLC.php](http://www.ameriburn.org/2012NLC.php)



This conference will focus on defining quality metrics as related to the delivery of burn care.

- Keep pace with national expectations in delivery of burn care
- Identify gaps of knowledge so as to focus our priorities in education
- Standardize research outcome measurements to guide clinical trials
- Optimize cost effectiveness and influence differential reimbursement

### American Burn Association 44th Annual Meeting

April 24–27, 2012  
Seattle, WA

[www.ameriburn.org/44thAnnualMeeting.php](http://www.ameriburn.org/44thAnnualMeeting.php)

