



**Fort Wayne Fire Department
307 East Murray Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46803
260-427-1170**



**Don't Just Whistle While You Work:
Hunt for Home Hazards While Spring Cleaning this Year**

By: Betty Schroeder EMT-P/PI

Winter is finally over and it's time to get your home ready for the warmer months ahead. Before you do, The Fort Wayne Fire Department suggests taking a good look around your home. The Fort Wayne Fire Department says there's a strong chance flammable materials are lurking in many areas, and that it's important to store and use them properly to avoid the risk of fire.

With yard chores, particularly lawn mowing, right around the corner, The Fort Wayne Fire Department urges caution when using and storing gasoline a flammable liquid that readily gives off vapors easily ignited with a spark or small flame. "Gasoline should only be used as a motor fuel, never as a degreaser or cleaning solvent. Using gasoline for any purpose other than as a motor fuel is just too dangerous," the Fort Wayne Fire Department notes that, if used properly, most gasoline fires are easily avoided.

According to the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), on average each year, nearly 8,000 home fires involve gasoline, and result in nearly 150 deaths. Gasoline should only be stored in tightly-capped containers specifically intended for the use, and placed in a garage or lawn shed, **never** in the basement or home itself.

The Fort Wayne Fire Department also points out that commonly used liquids such as lacquer thinners, denatured alcohol, and other solvents, which are often stored in basements, workshops, can be easily ignited by a nearby furnace or hot water heater. These liquids should be stored in their original containers, tightly-capped, and used far away from sparks or open flames. Other liquids, including paint thinners, mineral spirits and kerosene, are less easily ignited, but should be treated with the same respect. Finally, hang or spread rags soaked in oils or paint thinners outside to dry and then dispose of them properly. Always refuel gasoline-powered equipment well away from sparks or flames, buildings and foliage, and make sure the motor has cooled down before you fill the tank.

"Improperly stored or used flammable products cause unnecessary fires, injuries and even deaths," "Becoming familiar with the hazardous materials around your home can go a long way to protect you and your family."

Disclaimer: The information provided herein is not intended as a substitute for professional and medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Fort Wayne Fire Department does not recommend or endorse any specific tests, products, procedures, opinions, or other information that may be stated in this material. Reliance on any information provided within this material is solely at your own risk. Fort Wayne Fire Department will not be held responsible for any action taken by readers as a result of their interpretation of this material, which is intended for educational and information purposes only.