

*YCPARMIA's Mission Statement:*

*To protect the members' resources from the impact of loss through a program of insurance coverage, prevention, education, training, and service.*



December 2015

### Stay Warm to Prevent Cold Stress

It is easy enough to laugh off the fact that, well, California winters are just not that harsh compared to other States. However, it is important to know that anyone working in a cold environment may be at risk of cold stress.

Contributing factors to cold stress are wetness/dampness, dressing improperly, exhaustion, predisposing health conditions such as hypertension, hypothyroidism, diabetes, and poor physical condition.

What can be done for a person suffering from hypothermia?

- Call 911 immediately in an emergency; otherwise seek medical assistance as soon as possible.
- Move the person to a warm, dry area.
- Remove wet clothes and replace with dry clothes, cover the body (including the head and neck) with layers of blankets; and with a vapor barrier (tarp, garbage bag, etc). Do **NOT** cover the face.
- If medical help is more than 30 minutes away:
  - Give warm sweetened drinks if alert (no alcohol), to help increase the body temperature. Never try to give a drink to an unconscious person.
  - Place warm bottles or hot packs in armpits, sides of chest, and groin. Call 911 for additional rewarming instructions.

Always remember: Train your employees, use safe work practices, and dress properly.

### Toasty Toes Ergonomic Heated Footrest

By now you may have heard that space heaters have the potential of being a safety hazard. People often leave them turned on and then leave the room, put them too close to combustible items, or receive burns from them.

Now, there is something new that uses less energy, is safer to use, and provides just as much warmth to you for those cold winter months. The Toasty Toes ergonomic heated footrest provides gentle and safe radiant heat for legs and feet.

There are no exposed elements, blowers, or carbon monoxide. It is adjustable, and may lay flat, inclined, or upright as a radiant heat panel. At 90 watts, less than a standard 100-watt light bulb, this heated foot rest uses a fraction of the energy of a standard 1500-watt space heater.

Not only are these footrests more cost-efficient, Toasty Toes are safer than a traditional space heater as it never heats higher than 140 degrees. The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that space heaters, including both fixed and portables, are associated with 21,800 residential fires every year.

This heated footrest only weighs about 5 pounds and is portable enough to be used both at the office and around your home.



## Buyers Beware!

You may have seen or heard of the popular new toy that has been flying off the shelves...and catching fire. Also known as the hoverboard, these self-balancing boards that don't actually hover at all, have been the cause of some serious safety hazards as of late.

Hoverboards can cost upwards of almost \$1,000 for the top-of-the-line board with built in Bluetooth speakers. However, some buyers have been purchasing cheaper models for as low as \$80.

There are a range of concerns with certain varieties of hoverboard, mainly that the plug-in is prone to overheating or could cause an electric shock due to its lack of covering. Problem models also lack a reliable cut-off mechanism and have unsafe cabling.

In November, a woman was taken to the hospital in High Wycombe, UK for burns caused while her hoverboard was being charged.

In light of recent safety concerns, United Kingdom Trading Standards officers have seized more than 15,000 unsafe hoverboards. The London Fire Brigade warned in October that three house fires were caused by "defective Chinese-made hoverboards."

Another incident includes a Louisiana boy who received a \$300 board as a birthday present that caught his family's home on fire when the board suddenly exploded. The boy's mother, Jessica Horne, stated on her GoFundMe page, "When it ran out of charge, he brought it inside and put it on the charge. As I walked past his room, I saw it began to shoot sparks and within seconds it was in flames; within minutes the entire room was in flames." Horne says she ordered the gift from a company called Fit Turbo through Amazon.

There was also a report of an Alabama man who happened to step off his Smart Balance Wheel hoverboard just as the board started to shoot sparks, and eventually exploded (right).



NY Daily News stated that out of 17,000 hover boards inspected, 88% had an increased risk of "overheating, exploding or catching fire."



Paul Hodkinson (left) had £25,000 (about \$37,800) in kitchen and smoke damage to his home caused by the hoverboard that he bought for his grandchildren.

Do some serious research, keep in mind the possible danger, and be cautious if you do decide to give this gift a try this holiday season.