

Tailgate talk

Today's Subject:

Hot water & steam

Date: _____

While you probably already know that hot water and steam can be dangerous, you might be surprised to learn that about 100,000 people are hospitalized for hot-water burns every year in the U.S. Of those, about 12,000 victims die.

What to focus on

Here are four things to keep in mind to prevent injuries when working with hot water and steam.

1. Wear personal protective equipment. Choose heat-resistant gloves, an apron and boots. It's a good idea to wear gaiters over the boots to prevent water or steam from entering your footwear.

2. Check for signs of an injury. After working with hot water or steam, look closely for red, blistered, swollen, or discolored areas on your skin that could indicate a burn injury. Keep in mind that your hands, feet, face and genitalia are most susceptible to damage from hot water and steam.

3. Wash the wound with cold, running water for about 15 minutes if you discover you've been injured by hot water or steam. Then cover the area with a dry dressing. Don't apply ointment or butter to the affected area.

4. Call 9-1-1 right away for severe burns. While waiting for help, continue to treat the burn, but avoid using ice.