

Don't Be Victim Of Self-Made Farm And Home Tragedies

A farmer recently was refilling his tractor with gasoline. He had left the motor running as he had often done, when a spark ignited the gasoline fumes, causing a terrible explosion that resulted in his death.

RAIN INTERRUPTED A BACK-YARD barbecue that parents were giving for their son and a dozen of his friends. They moved the portable barbecue along with the guests into the garage. Because of the hard rains and high winds they closed the over-head doors. In a short while several of the youngsters were simultaneously overcome with carbon monoxide and had to be rushed to the hospital.

A MOTHER RECENTLY CLEANED the upholstery of two living room chairs with a full cup of carbon tetrachloride. That afternoon, her 5-year-old son sat on one of the chairs while watching his favorite television program. Afterwards he became so violently ill that he was rushed to a hospital and it took an expert medical team and an artificial kidney to save the lad's life.

THE POTENTIAL HAZARDS IN AND AROUND most households are overwhelming. And countless persons are innocent victims simply because they are not aware of dangers that may exist. Such was the case in the three examples mentioned. The farmer had refilled the gasoline tank on his tractor many times with the motor running, and perhaps he never realized the dangers involved. The parents were unaware that burning charcoal releases deadly carbon monoxide and should never be used except in a well-ventilated area. And certainly the mother didn't know that carbon tetrachloride vapors were so extremely dangerous or that they could be given off for such a long period of time after they were used.

THE UTMOST CAUTION SHOULD ALWAYS BE USED when pouring gasoline from one container into another since there is always danger that escaping vapors when mixed with air may ignite. When it is necessary to pour gasoline, by all means, do it away from open flames, electric switches, heat, and away from engines or motors while they are running or any other possible sources of ignition. Another dangerous source

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of ignition is through static electricity, which can be generated through gasoline in several ways. It may be generated by pouring gasoline from one container into another without having a metallic connection between the two containers or by filtering gasoline through a chamois.

THE LATTER PRACTICE SHOULD ALWAYS BE AVOIDED. In pouring gasoline from one container into another, a simple precaution to follow is to use a funnel which is put in contact with both containers; or, if you are using a hose, the metal nozzle should be kept in contact with the container being filled. Storage of kerosene or gasoline on a farm must be done with the utmost caution. It is unwise to keep them in the house. Never store or handle in glass containers as they are too easily broken. Storage cans should be of the proper type, painted red, if possible, and labeled clearly. Different

shapes and sizes should be used for gasoline and kerosene.

DO NOT BURN CHARCOAL FOR COOKING or heating purposes indoors or in any enclosed area. When charcoal burns, it produces carbon monoxide, a deadly gas. This gas is invisible, odorless and colorless and it can overcome a person without warning. Many cases of carbon monoxide poisoning have occurred from cooking with Japanese style hibachis indoors; from using grills in basements enclosed porches, garages and living rooms during rainy days or cold weather; and from trying to heat tents, cabins and automobiles with charcoal briquets and unventilated kerosene stoves.

EXPERTS SUGGEST THAT YOU DO NOT USE tetrachloride in your home. It is true that it is a common, readily available household chemical. It is also true that carbon tetrachloride is extremely hazardous. Some people regard it as a "safe" cleaning fluid merely because it is non-flammable. Yet, in truth, it is one of the most toxic house-

hold substances known.

CARBON TET'S MOST VICIOUS HAZARD is its vapor, which is far more poisonous than chloroform. And the victim usually has no warning at the time that he is being poisoned. Acute carbon tet poisoning causes kidney failure that is often fatal. Repeated and prolonged exposure can cause destruction of the liver. It is a wise precaution to check all cleaning fluids, fumigants, insecticides, paints and fire extinguishers on the premises for the ingredient carbon tetrachloride and remove any which contains it to a place where they can be locked and only by adults who understand

their dangers. Also avoid purchasing any of these products without first checking the labels to make sure carbon tet is not contained in them.

FARM and HOME ACCIDENTS ARE ON THE RISE. In the U.S. alone, according to the National Safety Council, the statistical average is — a death every 19 minutes and an injury every eight seconds.

The Council on Rural Health of the American Medical Association continually cautions all to be eternally vigilant so that farm and home accidents may be kept down to the lowest possible.

UNFORTUNATELY, ACCIDENTS NEVER TAKE A HOLIDAY.

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