

FIRE—USE PREVENTION—By Dad & Dave

1. **DAD ALWAYS HAD US BURN OUR PAPER TRASH IN THE FIREPLACE** of the living room during cold weather because it helped add to the warmth of the house. He told us, "Burn the trash in the fireplace."
2. **"THIS SAVES ENERGY, HELPS KEEP THE HOUSE WARM, & SAVES MONEY,** because it saves heating oil—for you, not the Arabs. All the years we've had a handyman with us & years before that when I was doing it, we always burned our trash in the fireplace, or the furnace if you've got the kind of furnace that can use wood or coal. But if you've got an oil or gas furnace that has a special burner you better not start throwing junk in on top of it—you're apt to cause trouble."
3. **WHERE GARBAGE COLLECTION SERVICE IS NOT GOOD YOU CAN SAVE YOUR BURN TRASH** by having separate trash cans in the kitchen—one for wet garbage & one for dry, burnable items. Then burn the burnable trash at least once a day.
4. **DAD WOULD OFTEN REMIND US TO BURN THE HOUSE THIS WAY IN THE MORNING OR EVENING.** "First thing when you get up in the morning burn the trash. Last thing at night before you go to bed is also a good time to burn the trash. Just be sure you don't set the house on fire or the furniture. It will help keep the house warm during the night & help warm it up in the morning."
5. **"IT'S BEST TO BURN IT TWICE A DAY.** If you burn it twice a day then you will never have too much. If you wait 'til the end of a week or two you'll have a mountain of trash in the backyard. It saves money, saves heat, saves energy, saves fuel, & the folks who get up early in the morning will appreciate you because you helped get the house nice & warm."
6. **HE WOULD ALSO INSTRUCT US TO PUT ONE LOG OVER THE TRASH** so that as it burned down the log would catch on fire & burn to nice warm coals. Dad always cautioned us not to make a big roaring fire, but usually just one or two logs, just enough to keep the house warm. One good reason is because logs were quite expensive where we were. Lighting a fire is much cheaper than running an electric heater, but the expense can really run up if someone throws on too many logs.
7. **"DON'T DO LIKE MY BOYS,** they brought all the wastebaskets in the house & dumped them all in the fireplace. They crammed the fireplace full of trash & nearly burned the house down! They put too much in the fireplace at once & it got too hot & they were scattering the whole neighborhood with hot ashes & sparks coming out the chimney & neighbours complaining. It's a good way to start somebody else's house on fire, put it all in the fireplace at once & strike a match."
8. **"JUST PUT OUT ONE HANDFUL OF TRASH TO PUT THERE,** light a match & start it going. Then take out your next handful & throw that on top of it, handful by handful. That way you make sure you don't put anything in there that's going to blow up in your face."
9. **"ALWAYS BE CAREFUL TO SEPARATE BOTTLES, CANS & FLASHLIGHT BATTERIES,** Flashlight batteries

- will explode in the fire. The safest thing to do is separate everything that won't burn—cans, bottles, batteries, jars, ink pens.—Even plastics will burn, & their smoke is very poisonous if you happen to breathe it. This is why so many people die in fires nowadays, from smoke inhalation, because so much plastic is used in homes & buildings. (P: Aren't light bulbs dangerous?) Yes, light bulbs will blow up, explode & scatter glass all over.
10. **"IF YOU'RE THE TRASHMAN IT'S UP TO YOU** to make sure you don't throw something in that's going to blow up in your face! Boy, I was always the trashman at our house when I was young, & I was very careful what I put in when I had to burn the trash.
11. **"ANY KIND OF BOTTLE, PARTICULARLY GLASS BOTTLES, NEVER LEAVE THE TOP ON WHEN YOU THROW IT AWAY.** If you screw the top back on at all, it might there's nothing but air in it, & then if it gets accidentally thrown in the fire it can explode, just from the expansion of the air. When it gets hot it expands & if the bottle's not strong enough it will explode, blow it apart & you'll have glass flying all over the livingroom. Even toothpaste tubes can be dangerous if you leave the lid on it. That lead won't burn anyway, so you might as well not try to burn it.
12. **"IT TAKES A LITTLE LONGER & IT'S A LITTLE MORE TROUBLE, BUT IT SAVES A LOT OF TROUBLE.** You usually have to stay on your knees in front of the fireplace while you go through each basket & pull out the trash by hand.
13. **"PULL OUT A HANDFUL, LOOK WHAT YOU'VE GOT IN YOUR HAND,** make sure there are no bottles, cans, batteries, explosives, plastics, bulbs. Pull it out of the wastebasket & throw it in the fire handful by handful. That's the best way to burn it anyway—little by little."
14. **YOU SHOULD BE SURE YOU HAVE A FIREPLACE SCREEN IN FRONT OF THE FIREPLACE TO PREVENT SPARKS FROM SHOOTING OUT** onto furniture & rugs. If you do it at night, be careful that you wait until it's well burned, maybe only a few little glowing coals or something, before you leave it! Be sure it's all burned & it's not going to pop out on the carpet after you're gone & catch the carpet & then the house afire! So it's always wise to keep a screen in front of the fire, because you might even throw something in that would pop, even small things. Even some kinds of wood explode & throw embers out on the carpet."
15. **ALSO, IT'S A VERY GOOD IDEA TO HAVE A SET OF FIREPLACE TOOLS** by the fireplace, such as a poker (a long iron rod), a small fireplace shovel, & a fireplace broom. Usually you can get a little set like that fairly cheaply in a hardware store. You'll need these to help control the fire & to clean up.
16. **BEFORE YOU LIGHT THE FIRE YOU NEED TO BE SURE THAT THE FLUE IS OPEN ON THE CHIMNEY.** The flue is a metal gate which most chimneys have to control the amount of smoke going up & out

- the chimney, & so the chimney can be closed off in cold weather to prevent cold air from entering. Usually there is a handle on the inside of the chimney & you can get down on your hands & knees & look up the chimney with a flashlight if you have to, to be sure that it's open, before lighting a fire. If you don't do this you might end up with the whole room or the whole house filled with smoke.
17. **DAD IS ALWAYS VERY SENSITIVE & CAUTIOUS ABOUT THE VENTILATION OF A ROOM.** You need to be especially aware of this when you light a fire, & always have a door or window slightly open when you have a fire in the house because a fire will consume oxygen out of the air, & you need to replenish it.
18. **IF YOU HAVE A FIREPLACE WHICH YOU USE REGULARLY YOU SHOULD CLEAN IT OUT EVERY SINGLE DAY** before use. It makes a better fire & looks a lot nicer. Be sure & clean up after yourself if you're building a fire & you drop leaves & twigs all over the floor.
19. **IF YOU WANT TO CLEAN IT OUT BUT THERE ARE STILL A FEW HOT COALS,** shovel the hot ashes into a bucket of water & carry them outside, because if you dump hot ashes on the garden without cooling them off first in a bucket of water, they could start a fire.
20. **ONE TIME SOME BOYS WERE A LITTLE CARELESS & THEY TOOK THE HOT ASHES OUT IN A PLASTIC BAG & PUT THEM INTO THE GARBAGE CAN.** They thought the ashes were cool enough, but a little while later we happened to find them there & they had melted the rubber garbage can! So carelessness can be costly!
21. **DAD WARNS NEVER TO LEAVE A FIRE UNATTENDED!** An unattended fire could send out a spark & burn up your house, & a fire which is not properly attended to get enough oxygen could stink up the house with smoke.
22. **USUALLY FIREPLACES COME WITH SOME KIND OF A METAL GRATE** or metal bars so you can place the wood or the materials up above floor level. This is so that more oxygen can get around the wood & burn the materials better. In order to get a fire going, use some paper trash or crumpled-up newspapers, then above that put some kindling wood, finer-chopped wood. Once that has begun to burn you can put on a log or two, to burn for a longer time.
23. **IF YOU THROW ON A STACK OF PAPERS YOU MIGHT THINK THEY'D BURN REAL WELL,** but will find out that the fire will eventually just go out & many of the papers will remain unburned in the center of your stack, which can be dangerous if you're trying to burn seltzer papers to get rid of them! So you have to crumple up papers in your hand a few at a time & then throw them on the fire. Sometimes it's a very time-consuming job to feed a fire in this manner, but worth it for security & comfort.
24. **BE SURE NOT TO BURN ANYTHING THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH TO USE.** For example, one time I was about to put a board on the fire & Dad stopped me & said it would be a good idea to save all boards for little carpentry projects, even little scraps of wood, & just burn rough logs or trash

- to keep warm.
25. **IF YOU DON'T HAVE A FIREPLACE BUT YOUR HOUSE HAS A WOOD OR COAL-BURNING FURNACE,** usually in the basement, you can also burn seltzer trash & dry paper trash there. Just open the little door on the furnace & feed it in a little at a time. There's usually a little ventilator door on the bottom that you can use to regulate the fire.
26. **IF YOU DON'T HAVE A FIREPLACE OR SUITABLE FURNACE YOU CAN ASK THE MEN AT A CONSTRUCTION SITE FOR A LARGE METAL OIL DRUM.** Situate it in the middle of a field or the most open part of your yard, clear of trees, bushes, clotheslines, etc. Puncture lots of holes in the bottom of the drum, with hammer & pick, for example, then set the drum on several bricks up off the ground so air can get in from the bottom to help burn. Wear gloves to toss paper in & use a long stick to stir paper & ashes. Cover the drum with a section of screening to keep ashes from flying out of the top.
27. **I GUESS THE MAIN THING IN BURNING TRASH IS THAT DAD DOESN'T LIKE TO WASTE ANYTHING** & he's extremely conservative with material things. Why throw out paper or burnable items if you live in a chilly or cold climate, when you can use these to heat up your house?
28. **DAD HAS A VERY SENSITIVE SENSE OF SMELL, & QUITE OFTEN HE'D HAVE US RUN OUTSIDE TO CHECK IF THERE WAS A FIRE** when he'd smell smoke! So beware of fire hazards in your home & train yourself that if you ever do smell smoke, investigate thoroughly! A fire could be caused by a transformer left plugged into the wall, or an electrical short, or a carelessly cared-for fire, or many other causes, so you must be very aware, especially if your house is wood & could burn easily. You might check 50 times & find no fire, but it's better than not checking & losing everything—maybe a life!
29. **THIS IS ONE REASON WHY THE CHECKLIST REQUIRES YOU TO CHECK YOUR HOME DAY & NIGHT** for prevention of accidents, break-ins & fire hazards. Consider now what you would do if there were an emergency & be prepared!
30. **WE LEARNED A LOT OF LESSONS ABOUT STORING SURVIVAL WATER** when we were in Tenerife. We learned just how much we need & appreciate water when it got cut off almost every day during certain seasons because the water supply there changes often & is sometimes unreliable.
31. **CHECK AROUND THE HOUSE TO SEE IF A STORAGE WATER TANK IS INSTALLED SOMEWHERE,** & if so, see if there is a valve to turn off water going from the tank to your house. You should normally keep this valve turned off so that if your city water goes off, then you'll know when you turn on the tap & get no water.
32. **THEN BEFORE OPENING YOUR TANK VALVE TO USE ITS WATER YOU NEED TO TAKE EMERGENCY MEASURES:** Go around the house & turn off all toilets, make sure all taps are turned tightly off, & inform everyone in your house that you're in a water crisis & there is to be no toilet flushing, excessive use of water, washing or bathing.

"HANDYMAN HINTS!"

- & water is to be used strictly for drinking or cooking! These are the exact measures that Dad had us take in Tenerife as we learned to live with our water shortages.
33. **IF YOU DON'T REALISE YOU HAVE A TANK & THE WATER IS CUT OFF** & you continue to use water from the tank at the rate you would normally use city water, your tank will soon be empty & you'll be in a desperate condition when there's nothing to drink & wash in. Learn lessons now about conserving water before it happens!
34. **MAKE SURE THE WATER TANK IS KEPT FULL DURING NORMAL CITY WATER PERIODS** so you'll have water when you need it. Make sure it's covered so bugs & dirt don't contaminate it. If it's dirty, empty it & scrub inside it with powdered cleanser & a brush. Rinse it out real good & fill it up again. Sometimes while using our tank water in Tenerife we would have bowel troubles & stomach pains because the water was dirty, but as soon as we cleaned out the tank real well just one time, we didn't have that trouble any more.
35. **IF YOU LIVE IN AN APARTMENT OR A HOUSE THAT DOESN'T HAVE A TANK & YOU'RE INFORMED THAT YOUR WATER IS ABOUT TO BE CUT OFF,** you probably should fill up your bathtub & every sink & pot & pan in the house so you'll have a survival water supply.
36. **ONE METHOD OF STORING WATER IS TO USE A LARGE PLASTIC GARBAGE CAN,** the type with a lid metal handles which clamp the lid securely on. Line this large garbage can with a large plastic bag. Fill the bag 9/10 full of water, seal it closed with a little piece of wire, & put the top on the garbage can. You can store many, many liters of water in this manner. Then if your water does go bad or moldy you can very easily change by just dumping out the water, throw out the old plastic bag, & start the process again.
37. **USUALLY THE COMMERCIALY-SOLD PLASTIC 10 LITER WATER JUGS WITH A SMALL MOUTH ARE NOT GOOD** because they gather mold & sometimes you end up throwing the whole thing away. Liter glass jars you can fill & store in a cabinet or some obscure place are even better than that. When you're storing water make sure the jars are very clean & try to fill them right to the top with water so that there's not so much air with bacteria that can cause the water to go bad.
38. **ANOTHER IMPORTANT FACTOR: REMEMBER WHEN YOU STORE JARS THAT WATER WEIGHS A LOT!** A liter of water weighs about one kilo, so if you have 100 liters of water stored, it weighs something like 100 kilos! So be careful how you distribute the weight on shelves.
39. **IF THERE'S SOME WATER CRISIS EMERGENCY & YOU HAVEN'T STORED ANY WATER,** then you should immediately drain the water from the pipes into pots & pans before other people in the building do the same! Make sure immediately that no toilets are flushed because there are many liters of water in the tank part of a toilet! During a water emergency you cannot flush the toilet very much, just the minimum possible.
40. **IN OUR HOUSE THE WATER TANK WAS DISTANT & WE COULD NOT TELL WHEN IT WAS FULL** because there

- was no float valve & the tank filled when city pressure was high. So we found it necessary to place a special float-valve on the top that threw a switch when the water level came up to the top, & this switch turned on a bell in our house which would alert us when the tank was full. Sometimes the bell wouldn't ring until 2 or 3 in the morning, but at least we knew we had water! You'll never appreciate what a priceless commodity water is until you have none, so start storing today!
41. **DAD MADE ME THE "WATER OFFICER" DURING THESE EMERGENCIES,** & I was to go around & warn everybody that we were in a crisis. I was the only one allowed to flush a toilet & determine when it needed to be flushed, believe it or not, & I had to keep a close eye & was responsible for how & how much water was used.
42. **YOU'D BE AMAZED AT HOW MUCH A DRIPPING FAUCET WILL WASTE WATER.** A trickling faucet left on in the garden will soon empty your tank! So these are things to watch for!
43. **IF YOU HAVE A HOUSE WHERE YOU ARE FAIRLY PERMANENT YOU MIGHT CONSIDER ADDING A TANK OR TWO.** It's not that difficult & you might be able to get the help of a plumber to install it. Just remember, a water crisis can happen & probably will happen to you some time!
44. **ONE COUPLE WAS TELLING ME RECENTLY DURING OUR VISIT** that they were in a home where there was a general strike & city water was cut off for a long period of time. The water that some of the brethren had stored had not been checked & when they tried to use it it was foul, totally bad. It was extremely inconvenient for them to have to go out of the house & find water & bring it back, so check your water!
45. **IN ANOTHER HOME WE WERE VISITING WE ASKED IF THEY HAD A STOCK OF SURVIVAL WATER & THEY SAID "YES".** We asked how much & they said 5 liters! There were a number of adults there, so we had to remind them that it takes about a liter a day per person to survive. So they certainly needed more than that! If there is ever an emergency & food & water are scarce, you should slow down your activity to decrease your necessity for food & water.
46. **FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU'RE TRYING TO FIX A DRIPPING PIPE JOINT, THE PIPE CAN BREAK OFF** at the wall or in the floor or in the wall somewhere where the threads are rusty & the parts are corroded together. Should you exert some force on these parts they can burst. So unless you are a plumber & know what you're doing, don't touch it!
47. **IF YOU DO JOIN PIPES TOGETHER YOU REALLY HAVE TO KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING.** It's an art & you need the proper materials, one of which is a special pasty material, pipe joint compound, that you put on the threads before joining the

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- pieces of pipe together. This prevents water from leaking. Dad said if you do have a leak, especially in new plumbing, often the leak will stop after a while because the sediment from the water fills up the little leaks. So often new plumbing will repair itself.
49. **A LOT OF HOMES HAVE PROBLEMS WITH WATER LEAKING AROUND THEIR BATHROOM TILES.** If you don't take care of this it can ruin the walls from the humidity seeping in & causing the wall to rot or themselves up if you don't pay proper attention! You can take care of this by going to a hardware store & getting a tube of tile "seal-chine" which is loaded & turned on, & the little eraser. Usually it comes in a tube & some types are clear, some are white. Just follow the instructions & apply it along the crack between the tiles.
50. **MANY HOMES HAVE A SHOWER BUT DO NOT USE A SHOWER CURTAIN,** but a shower curtain is really essential to hold the water in; otherwise the water will cause a lot of damage to the floor & walls. Be sure that whenever someone takes a shower that a window or door is open a little for ventilation, so that the humidity has some way to escape. In many homes we've seen the paint begins to chip off the ceiling from all the steamy humidity from showers.
51. **REMEMBER THAT YOUR TOILET PLUMBING CAN BE RUINED BY PEOPLE TRYING TO FLUSH TOO MUCH PAPER DOWN.** In our older houses Dad always made sure there was a plastic bag-lined covered trash can & a very small amount of toilet paper & other items in the trash can.
52. **CONSIDERING THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE THAT LIVE IN SOME OF OUR HOUSES, WE SHOULD RESTRICT THE AMOUNT OF PAPER FLUSHED DOWN THE TOILETS.** And do! Campons are to be flushed, girls! Wrap in paper & put into covered bathroom trash cans! We always tried to take out the bathroom trash every single day! Just take the bag out, tie the top & take it out to your garbage can for sanitary reasons. If you leave these things in the trash can for a day or 2, they begin to ferment, & can really spread bacteria. Too much paper in the toilet can absolutely ruin toilet drain pipes & clog them up & be extremely expensive to get repaired, & can even ruin the operation of cesspools.
53. **CLOGGED DRAINS: YOU CAN UNCLOG MOST DRAINS WITH A DRAIN-CLEANING POWDER.** Put a couple of spoonfuls down the drain & add a little water. It will generally eat away the globs of hair & goop down in the pipes, then later, run a stream of warm water down the drain.
54. **CAREFULLY FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS ON THE CONTAINER.** These types of drain cleaners are highly of toxic & can cause serious burns if they come in contact with moist skin. Keep them well away from the reach of children. You don't need to take apart the whole plumbing of the drainpipe in order to clean out the drain.
55. **ADVISE EVERYONE IN YOUR HOME TO PULL HAIR OUT OF THE DRAIN IN TUBS & LAVATORIES** after hair washing, & try to use a small drain screen over the drain to prevent clogging. Always throw hair in a drain garbage into the trash, never down the toilet, or it can easily clog the toilet drain pipes too!

- WASHING MACHINES:**
56. **DAD SAID THAT SOMETIMES THESE AUTOMATIC WASHING MACHINES CAN BE WORSE THAN THE OLD MANUAL TYPE** that didn't have any controls & just ran as long as you stood there & did the washing & had it turned on. But the danger of the automatic ones is that you figure out, going to go wrong with them, so you set them & take care of this it can ruin the walls from the humidity seeping in & causing the wall to rot or themselves up if you don't pay proper attention!
57. **THIS HAPPENED TO US ONE TIME** when our machine was loaded & turned on, & the little eraser-pull-out lint filter on the bottom front part of the machine had not been properly screwed in. The machine was turned on & left running while the people responsible went to a movie.
58. **WHEN THEY GOT HOME THEY FOUND THE BASEMENT FLOODED & DAD WAS EXTREMELY ANGRY.** He found that the machine had been stuck on one cycle & the water had been pouring right out of the filter hole & could easily have burned up the machine! So he gave us a very stern warning, & said that could have been a very expensive movie if the washer was ruined! If we ever burned out another machine, like we'd done already once before, we'd do all laundry by hand.
59. **THIS IS A GOOD WARNING THAT AUTOMATIC DEVICES AREN'T JUST LEFT & ASSUMED TO BE OPERATING,** but should be checked regularly. If you have an automatic washer (very easy to rent in simple models, by the way) you should check it every few minutes or 1/4 hour to be sure that it has gone from one cycle into the next properly. The filter needs to be cleaned regularly—at least after every 2 wash loads!
60. **THE LAUNDRY STEWARD IN YOUR HOME NEEDS TO READ THE INSTRUCTION BOOK** on automatic washers, or any other device like this, to be sure that they are only handled in the correct manner & anyone violating the rules should probably lose their rights to use the machinery.
61. **WE USUALLY CHOSE ONE SIMILAR, COLD WATER CYCLE TO ALWAYS USE FOR CLOTHING** & one hot or warm wash cycle for towels & linens. All the women are instructed how to use the machine but one steward is put in charge of the care & schedule of the wash loads. Then if any problems develop, better call the handyman!
62. **DON'T BE SLOTHFUL ABOUT GETTING THAT LOAD OF WASH OUT OF THE MACHINE!** You should know about what time it'll be over & get the laundry out. Laundry left sitting wet in a warm house or warm water will easily mildew. Quite often the stinky smell from mildew never comes out of the clothes!
63. **QUILTING DOORS:**
64. **IN HOMES WE'VE LIVED IN DAD HAS OFTEN HAD ME GO AROUND DILTING DOORS.** If you have squeaky doors you ought to oil them so not to disturb others & to cut down on the noise in your house. If you take care of the little details you can turn your house into a home. As Dad often quotes: "Building a home, I reckon that's fun, because it's a job that's never done!"—Edgar Guest.

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