

ESSEX NEWS | SPECIAL ISSUE



Town of Essex Office of the Fire Marshal



John A. Planas
Fire Marshal

In Case of An Emergency Dial 9-1-1

SAFE HANDLING AND DISPOSAL OF STAINS AND RAGS

Dear Essex Residents,

As your Fire Marshal, it is my responsibility to ensure the safety of our community, particularly during times when certain hazards become more prevalent. With the arrival of warmer weather, many of us are engaging in indoor and outdoor staining projects. While these projects can enhance our homes and outdoor spaces, they also carry potential risks, especially if not handled and disposed of properly.

I want to emphasize the dangers associated with improper disposal of rags used for staining, as we typically see a rise in fires during this time due to this issue. When rags soaked with substances like linseed oil are carelessly thrown into regular garbage cans, a dangerous chain of events can occur. Linseed oil evaporates rapidly, leading to an exothermic reaction that generates heat. As the temperature of the rags increases, this heat accelerates. If the accumulated heat exceeds the rate of heat dissipation, the temperature can rise to a point where the rags spontaneously combust, potentially igniting nearby items and causing a fire.

To prevent such incidents, I urge you to follow these essential steps for the safe disposal of oily rags:

1. Once the rag is no longer in use, soak it in a bucket of water.
2. Wring out the rag and allow it to dry flat, preferably outside.
3. Ensure that nothing is placed on top of the drying rag to prevent smothering, as this can trap heat and increase the risk of combustion.
4. Once the rag is completely dried out, it is safe to dispose of it.
5. Dispose of the dried-out rag in an outdoor trash can rather than in the house.

Remember, it's better to be cautious and take preventive measures to avoid potential fire hazards.

Additionally, I want to remind everyone about the importance of signing up for Community Connect. Since my last communication, many residents have already signed up and provided vital information in their Community Connect accounts. As part of our efforts to ensure your safety, I have been visiting homes and businesses to check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and replace batteries as needed. By signing up for Community Connect, you can request a visit from me to check your detectors and ensure they are functioning correctly.

To sign up for Community Connect and schedule a detector check, please visit: <https://www.communityconnect.io/info/ct-townofessex>

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at 860-767-4340 ext. 146. Your safety is my priority.

Stay safe,

John Planas
Essex Fire Marshal

To sign up for *Essex News* & Town emails [click here](#).

Sign up for Safer Essex Emergency Alerts.

Receive alerts about critical community information directly to your cell phone or email.
Go to www.essexct.gov and search "Safer Essex" or call 860-767-4340 x112.



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