



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES

DDS TRANSMITTAL #19-11

TO: All Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) Residential and Day Services Providers

FROM: Erin Leveton, Deputy Director
Quality Assurance and Performance Management Administration

DATE: July 11, 2019

RE: Scald Injury Preventions

I am writing to share vital resources with you from the American Burn Association written to prevent scald injuries.

You may have read recently about the tragic deaths of at least two people with developmental disabilities in other states caused by burns from overly hot water in their bathtubs. In one instance, the water heater had been set to a proper temperature yet it still failed to regulate the temperature properly. This reminds us all of the importance of having and using a process for temperature checks every time a person is supported to bathe, using a thermometer, or, if one is not available, a bare wrist – gloves cannot be used for water temperature checks.

Attached is the American Burn Association Scald Injury Prevention Educator's Guide: A Community Fire and Burn Prevention Program Supported by the United States Fire Administration Federal Emergency Management Agency. This resource is also available on-line at: <http://ameriburn.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/scaldinjuryeducatorsguide.pdf>. You will see that in addition to addressing burns from tap water, the guide includes prevention information for scalds from food and beverages, microwaves, and other causes.

Please review this attachment closely and then review your agency's processes for ensuring that people are safe from scald injuries. Consider whether you may need to make any changes or offer refresher training for staff.

Thank you for all you do for the people we support.