

# POISONology

SAFETY & FIRST AID TIPS FROM THE ARIZONA POISON AND DRUG INFORMATION CENTER

## Be 'poison-smart' when buying a home



Buying a home can be a stressful experience. It can be even more of a hassle if there are a lot of health hazards to fix.

The American Association of Poison Control Centers wants home-buyers to shop smart when they look for a new place to dwell. Here are a few things to look for when you're shopping for a new house - or items to invest in when you're moving in.

### **Carbon monoxide and Smoke Detectors.**

- Make sure homes have carbon monoxide and smoke detectors. If your house doesn't have them, buy them. Put carbon monoxide detectors near bedrooms, and make sure their batteries are replaced regularly.
- Know which fuel-burning appliances and equipment can be a source of carbon monoxide poisoning when they are not vented and/or maintained properly.

### **Mold.**

- Look for signs of water problems like leaking pipes or faucets, wet areas, musty smells, water stains or high humidity.
- If you see a leak, remember that mold is a possibility. Work hard to maintain a dry home, and quickly repair leaks and other sources of moisture in the home.

### **Lead.**

- Homes built before 1950 are highly likely to contain lead paint and homes built before 1978 may also contain this toxic paint. Look for paint chips or flaking lead-based paint. Window sills and doorways are common locations.
- Test for lead hazards in the home including the soil. Tests can be purchased at home improvement stores.

### **Pests.**

- Look for entry points like gaps surrounding pipes and holes in walls. In addition, identify sources of food, water and shelter.
- If you see evidence of pests, know the enemy - identify the specific type of pest that is in your home. Use integrated pest-management techniques to rid the house of pests (use non-chemical methods first). If you need to use pesticides, read the label first and take precautions or hire a professional.

*If you have other poisoning concerns or questions call the toll-free national hotline at 1-800-222-1222 to reach your local poison center. If you live in Arizona outside of Maricopa County, this number will get you to our experts at the Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center in Tucson.*