

Prevention of Car Radiator Burns

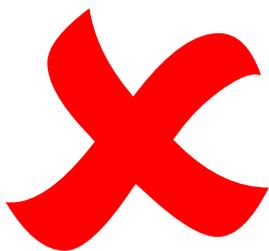
Factsheet

- Car radiator burns are common cause of scald burn injuries, particularly in males. Scald burns are among the top cause of burns for adults and children*
- Most often these burn injuries involve the face, upper arms and upper chest areas and are generally caused when the radiator cap is removed whilst the engine is still hot and steam that is trapped under high pressure in the radiator is released spraying steam and boiling water upwards.
- Although manufacture warning labels have been placed on many car radiators these burn injuries are still common.

*Data obtained from Burns Registry of Australia and New Zealand (BRANZ) 2018



- ✓ Do regularly service your vehicle to ensure there are no mechanical issues that may cause your engine to overheat
- ✓ Do refer to the cars owner's manual for clear instructions and advice
- ✓ Do keep the water in the radiator overflow bottle between the minimum and maximum level to ensure safe pressures



- ✗ Do not remove the radiator pressure cap when the engine is hot
- ✗ Do not allow the water level in the overflow bottle to become too low as this increases coolant in the radiator and builds pressure
- ✗ Do not lean over the radiator cap when unscrewing



First Aid for Burns

If you, or someone you know is burnt, take the following actions:

1. Remove clothing and jewellery
2. Apply cool running water to the burn for **20 minutes** (effective up to 3 hours after injury)
Spraying water or alternating wet cloths can help if limited water
If no water available a hydrogel burn first aid dressing can be used until water available. Caution use on large %TBSA due to hypothermia
Do NOT use ice, butter, creams or alternatives
3. Cover burn with clean cloth and keep the patient warm
4. Seek medical attention for any burn bigger than 3cm; or with blisters; or if any other concerns