

Fire Safety Tips

Household Fire Safety Tips

Be Ready and Know What to Do!

Every year, almost 5,000 Americans die in home fires. That's 13 people every day, dying in their own homes. Tens of thousands more suffer pain and disfigurement from burns and smoke inhalation. It could happen to you and your family.

Conduct a Home Fire Safety Tour

You can reduce the danger of fire in your home dramatically by taking a fire safety tour of your home right now. Use this guide to look for fire hazards in and around the home. Start your fire safety tour where most home fires start, the living areas.

Take These Steps to Have a Fire-Safe Home!

Learn the common causes of home fires and burns.

- The leading cause of home fires is heating equipment that has been improperly designed, incorrectly installed, poorly maintained or misused. This includes wood stoves, fireplaces, chimneys, portable heaters and other space heaters.
- Careless handling of cigarettes, cigars and pipes results in more fire deaths than any other single cause.
- Cooking fires cause more injuries than any other type of home fire.

Complete This Fire Safety Checklist

- Install and maintain smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Keep 2A10BC multipurpose type fire extinguishers charged and ready to use. Know how to operate them properly.
- Designate two exits from each room and a safe meeting place outside.
- Make sure every family member knows how to escape from the house by crawling low in smoke.
- If a fire breaks out, get out fast and call the fire department from a neighbor's home.
- If your clothes catch on fire, stop, drop, and roll to extinguish the flames.
- Never go back into a burning building for any reason.
- Hold regular fire drills.

Prevention Begins with a Home "HOT SPOT" Inspection ... Inside Your Home. Involve the whole family, hold regular fire drills and check for hot spots.

Kitchen

- Wear short or tight-fitting sleeves when cooking, tight-fitting sleeves are safer than loose sleeves that could catch fire.
- Maintain constant watch when preparing food, never leave cooking unattended.
- Use a low flame to guard against overheated grease and overflows.

- Always turn pot handles toward the center of the stove - Children may grab, or run into, the handle and spill hot cooking oil or hot water onto themselves.
- Keep your stove and oven clean, a clean stove is much safer than a greasy one. Wipe up spills promptly.
- Place towels, napkins and potholders away from the stove.
- Do not use your oven or broiler drawer as a storage place.
- Keep all kitchen appliances in proper working order, have repairs made by a professional.
- Set your hot water heater to 120°F to prevent scalds.

Living Rooms, Family Rooms, Recreation Rooms

- If anybody smokes in your home, you need large ashtrays that won't tip over. Remember that, a dropped cigarette can smolder for hours in an upholstered chair before bursting into flame.
- Make a habit of seeing that matches and lighters are out of children's reach. Teach children, that matches and lighters are tools for adults, not toys.
- If you have a coal or wood-burning stove. Check with your fire department to make sure it is installed properly, and have your chimney cleaned at least once a year. Clothes, furniture, newspapers and other combustibles should be kept at least 36 inches from stoves, fireplaces and space heaters. Use a screen over your fireplace, and never leave a fire unattended.
- Portable heaters can also pose a fire hazard. If you are using a kerosene heater, use caution and fuel it according to the manufacturer's directions. Portable heaters must be placed at least 3 feet from combustibles and away from doorways and other traffic paths. Be aware that many fuel burning heaters produce carbon monoxide and should only be use in an area that is well ventilated.
- Check for electrical cords and plugs that are cracked, worn or frayed, and for overloaded electrical outlets.
- If you must use extension cords, plug only one appliance into each cord and don't run extension cords under rugs or across doorways.

Basement/Utility/Storage Areas

- Dispose of unnecessary trash that could fuel a fire, including sawdust and wood shavings around the workbench. Has your heating equipment been checked this year? The area around the furnace, clothes dryer or water heater must be clear of combustibles.

Bedrooms/Smoking

- Keep smoking materials away from the bedroom area, smoking in bed is a deadly home fire hazard.
- Store matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
- Use large, heavy ashtrays that won't tip over.
- Extinguish cigars, cigarettes and tobacco completely.
- Empty used ashtrays only after the contents have cooled.
- Check wastebaskets and furniture for smoldering cigarettes.
- Refrain from smoking when sleepy or under the influence of alcohol or medication.

Electrical

- Purchase UL-approved or tested appliances.
- Plug only one appliance into an outlet or extension cord, overloaded outlets and undersized extension cords are a serious fire hazard.
- Unplug appliances after use.
- When unplugging an appliance, grasp the plug firmly and pull straight out.

- Allow appliances to thoroughly cool before storing.
- Give large appliances their own heavy-duty electrical circuit.
- Use only safety-tested extension cords or multiple adapters with built-in circuit breakers.
- Provide appliances with adequate air circulation.
- Keep appliances away from water, and have them professionally serviced if they get wet.
- Replace broken plugs or frayed and worn cords immediately.
- Call a licensed electrician if you experience frequently blown fuses, tripped circuit breakers, flickering lights, or a shrinking television picture. All are signs of faulty or inadequate wiring.
- Supervise children when using appliances.
- If there is a fuse box, is it equipped with proper sized fuses, with spares handy? If a Fuse blows or a Circuit Breaker trips, try to find the cause. Make sure a new fuse is the right size and amperage. Fuses protect you against electrical fires; misusing them may overload a circuit, creating a fire hazard.

Heating Systems

- Provide all home heating devices with at least 3 feet of clear space, away from beds, drapes, furniture and other combustible materials.
- To ensure proper ventilation when heating your home, keep a door or window slightly open.
- Check local building codes for regulations regarding uses of home heating systems.

Woodstoves, Fireplaces, Electric and Gas Heaters

- Have chimneys and fireplaces cleaned regularly.
- Your chimney should be topped with a spark arrester.
- Keep the damper open when in use.
- Use a glass screen large enough to cover the opening.
- Burn dry, well-seasoned hardwood because it's the most efficient fuel.
- Dispose of cooled ashes in a tightly covered metal container.
- Check filters on heating units, to ensure they are clean and free of dust and lint.
- Place electrical heaters far away from water sources.
- Check wires for damage and have them repaired immediately.
- Make sure your home's wiring is sufficient to handle the heater's needs.

Outside Your Home

- Store flammable liquids such as gasoline, in tight, properly labeled fire-safe containers, away from heat sources and small children.
- Keep your distance from ignition sources (like open pilot lights on water heaters and stoves) when using flammables.
- Turn off your lawn mower and allow it to cool before adding gasoline.
- Keep weeds cleared away from your home by 100' (100 feet).
- Clear away pine needles and leaves from the roof, eaves and rain gutters.
- Trim all tree limbs within 10 feet and remove all dead limbs hanging over the house or garage.
- When cooking outdoors, keep children away from hot grills.
- Recycle newspapers promptly.

Know how to correct fire and burn hazards quickly and safely.

FOLLOW THESE VALUABLE TIPS AND PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM FIRES AND BURNS.
FIRE PREVENTION BEGINS AT HOME!

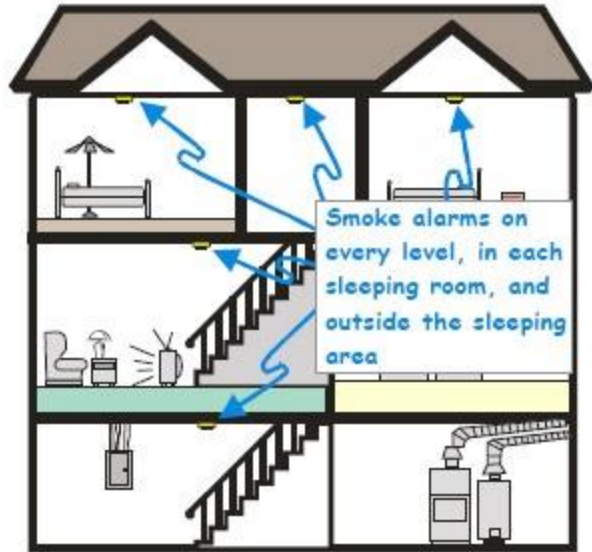
Install Smoke Detectors

Almost every day, a smoke detector saves somebody's life. Most fatal home fires happen while people are asleep. Smoke detectors wake people up before smoke overcomes them. In fact, with working smoke detectors, your risk of dying in a fire is cut in half!

Smoke detectors warn you to get out. When that warning sounds, everyone in your family needs to know how to escape quickly.

Along with your family, plan two escape routes from each room. Next, agree on a place where you will all meet outside the house; preferably in front, where the fire trucks would arrive. Then practice escaping, with fire drills at least every six months.

It's particularly important to teach young children that they can't hide from fire, but they can escape.



Replace batteries every year
Replace smoke alarms every 10 years



One Step Cuts Your Risk in Half-- Smoke Detectors!

- At a minimum, you need smoke detectors outside each bedroom and on each additional level of the house - including the basement.
- On a floor with no bedrooms, install the required detector in or near the living area, where most home fires start, and at the base of stairways.
- If you already have all the smoke detectors you need, great! Just test them now, and make that a weekly habit.
- Replace the batteries according to the manufacturer's recommendations. A good rule of thumb is when you change your clock, change your battery.
- Warn everyone in your household to leave smoke detector batteries alone, resist the temptation to borrow them for other purposes.

"A quick tour of your house, a few dollars invested in smoke detectors and a few precautions to follow - these simple, inexpensive steps can make your place fire safe."