

HOW TO PREVENT FIRES IN YOUR HOME

Home fires are often caused by smoking, cooking, and heating in the home. You can prevent fires by following these tips:



If you smoke...

- Never smoke when lying down, drowsy or in bed.
- Use large, deep, tip-resistant ashtrays and place them on a flat surface.
- Wet cigarette butts and ashes before emptying them into the trash.
- Smoke outside when possible.
- Never smoke near oxygen tanks.



If you cook...

- Keep an eye on what you fry. Most cooking fires start from frying food.
- Wear short sleeves or roll them up so they don't catch on fire.
- Move items that can burn away from the stove.
- Don't cook if you are drowsy from alcohol or medicine.
- Use oven mitts to handle hot pans.
- If a pan of food catches fire, slide a lid over it and turn off the burner.



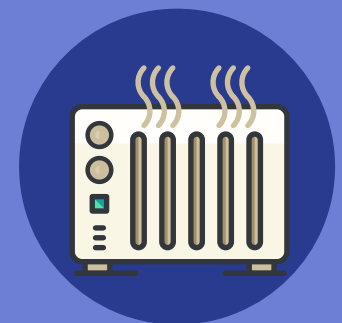
If you use a fireplace...

- Have a professional clean and inspect your fireplace, wood stove, or coal stove once a year. Look in the phone book under "chimney cleaning" for a professional near you.
- Do not burn green wood, artificial logs, boxes, or trash.
- Use a metal mesh fireplace screen to keep sparks inside.
- If your fireplace has glass doors, leave them open while burning a fire.



If you use a space heater...

- Keep the heater 3 feet away from anything that can burn, including you.
- Unplug heaters when you aren't using them, including when you leave your home or go to bed.
- Consider a heater that is designed to turn off if it is tipped over.



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If you light candles...

- Never leave a burning candle unattended.
- Do not place candles near flammable materials.
- Put candles in a non tip candleholder and in a secure place where children or pets cannot knock them over.
- Always make sure to extinguish a candle before leaving your home, office or going to bed.



If you use an electric blanket...

- Never leave a blanket on high for an extended period of time
- Follow manufacturers guidelines regarding proper use.
- Never bunch or wad the blanket.
- Turning your blanket off when you turn off your alarm is a simple and safe habit.
- Smooth the blanket out flat to avoid concentrating the heat.



Have a fire escape plan...

- Install smoke detectors in all bedrooms, in the hallway, and every level of your home. Change the batteries in your smoke detector yearly.
- Plan your exit drill with your family. Draw a sketch of your home that identifies two exits out of every room. Practice your exit with different scenarios so alternate routes need to be used.
- Locate a central meeting place outside the home like a mailbox or tree.



How to use a fire extinguisher...

- The P.A.S.S. acronym will help you remember how to use an extinguisher.
- **P**ull the Pin- pull the small pin inserted in the handle of the fire extinguisher.
- **A**im the extinguisher-aim the extinguisher at the base or front edge of the fire.
- **S**queeze the handle- this will release the pressurized extinguishing agent.
- **S**weep from side to side- Keep the extinguisher aimed at the base of the fire and sweep side to side, pushing the fire away from you.

