



Basic Home Fire Safety Tips

Install smoke alarms on every level of your home and outside every bedroom door. Test the alarms once a month and change the batteries twice a year. Update your smoke detectors every ten years.

Plan ahead.

- If your home catches fire, how can you escape from each room?
- Where will you meet once you get out of the house?

Be sure to teach children:

- To test doors for heat before opening them;
- To crawl through rooms filled with smoke;
- To stop and think about furniture placement if they can't see;
- If they are trapped in a room, to stuff a blanket or towel under the door then open a window and wave something brightly colored while calling for help.

Keep items that can catch fire at least three feet away from anything that gets hot, like the stove, candles or space heaters.

Manufactured/Mobile Homes

Choose a home manufactured AFTER 1976 that includes the HUD label certifying it meets safety standards.

Never store items under the home, particularly flammable liquids, paint and paint thinners, stains, firewood, space heaters, grills, and charcoal.

If your kitchen smoke alarm is particularly sensitive, replace it with a photoelectric style that better handles cooking smoke.

Campfires

Set up campfires at least 25 feet away from structures and objects that can burn. Clear away leaves, sticks and other natural debris, as well as low, overhanging branches.

Be cognizant of the weather. Fires can quickly get out of control on windy days or dry conditions.

Attend the campfire at all times, and do not let children or pets get too close.

Always have a hose or bucket of water, or shovel and dirt or sand nearby to put the fire.

Before leaving it, make sure the fire is completely out. Let the fire die down as much as possible, then cover it with water, using a shovel or stick to stir the water into the full area of the fire pit. Continue to add water and stir until you no longer hear a hissing sound and no new smoke is created when you add water. Add one more bucket of water, and then touch the wood in the center and lift the stones around the edge making sure they are cool to your touch.

Candles

REMEMBER: Lit candles are fire.

Keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn. Don't forget to consider breezes from open windows or fans that could blow items like curtains and papers into the flame.

Blow out all candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Avoid the use of candles if you might fall asleep.

Use candleholders that are sturdy and don't tip over easily. Place them on surfaces where children can't reach and pets don't go. Never leave children alone in a room with a lit candle.

Consider using flameless candles.

Extension Cords

Never use an extension cord with any appliance or electronic. In fact, it's best practice to only use extension cords on a temporary basis, and to replace them with permanent wiring by a licensed electrician or with a surge protector rated for the job you are asking it to do.

Grilling

Propane and charcoal grills should only be used outdoors, away from deck railings and out from under eaves and low hanging branches.

Always make sure your grill lid is open before lighting.

With charcoal grills, make sure the coals are cooled completely before disposing in a metal container.

With propane grills, check for leaks in the gas tank hose each year before using it for the first time.

In the Kitchen

Nearly 90% of kitchen fires start with unattended cooking. Stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling or broiling. Stay in the home when simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling. Use a timer to remind you that food is cooking.

Keep flammable materials, like potholders and hand towels, away from the stove. Avoid wearing loose clothing, particularly long, loose sleeves.

Clean cooking surfaces and areas around it to prevent grease buildup.

Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen.

Lamps and Light Bulbs

Keep lamps and light bulbs away from anything that can burn, including curtains, blankets, and plastic. Remove plastic coverings from lampshades and be careful of breezes that could blow things like sheer curtains toward a light source.

Avoid putting cords where they can be pinched by furniture. Do not lay cords under rugs or carpets. Make it part of your monthly cleaning routine to check cords for weak spots, and replace them immediately if you find any.

Space Heaters

Before purchasing a space heater, look for one certified for home use by a qualified testing laboratory.

Keep the heater at least three feet away from anything that can burn. Be particularly careful with children and blankets.

Whenever possible, choose a heater with a thermostat and overheat protection. Also look for automatic shut-off if it ever tips over.

Keep space heaters out of pathways and doorways.

Never use a space heater with an extension cord.

Turn off portable and space heaters when you go to sleep or leave the room.

Washers and Dryers

Make sure both are plugged straight into an outlet. Do not use an extension cord with your washer, dryer, or other major appliances.

Do not use your dryer without the lint filter in place. Make sure to clean it before or after each load of laundry. Once a month, vacuum out any lint that's accumulated inside the area your filter sits.

Make sure the air exhaust vent pipe is not restricted and the flap can open when the dryer is operating.

Turn off the dryer when you leave home or go to bed.

Once a year, clean out the vent pipe or call a dryer lint removal service.

Winter Holidays

Place Christmas trees and holiday decorations at least three feet away from heat sources, including space heaters, fireplaces, and candles.

Purchase flame retardant artificial trees or make sure live trees always have plenty of water.

Check light strings and other electrical decorations for fraying cords or weak spots. Do not use if you are uncertain about the integrity of the wires or the plastic protective coatings.

Always turn off the tree and other lights if you leave home or go to bed. Never use lit candles to decorate a tree and always extinguish flames before going to bed.

Check the integrity of your tree stand. Replace it if it tips easily and train children and pets to keep back.