

Household Fire Safety

Knowledge is the key to protect your family and home from a house fire. Take a moment to read these general household safety tips below.

- Develop an escape plan with your family and practice this plan at least twice a year. Be sure and create a meeting place far enough away from flames and smoke. Reinforce this meeting place with the whole family often, especially small children. If a house fire does occur, get out immediately and call 911. Once out of the burning building, NEVER go back inside.
- Have working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on every level of your home. Make sure they are placed according to building codes and test the detectors monthly.
- Make sure the home is equipped with fire extinguishers throughout the home, especially in the kitchen. It is a good idea to read the instructions on extinguishers often. That way if a fire does occur, using an extinguisher will be second nature.
- Be cautious whenever using extension cords. Cords should not be covered, run through walls, ceilings, doorways, or floors. Covered cords can overheat causing a fire hazard. Extension cords should be used only as a temporary solution, not as permanent wiring. Before plugging anything into the cord, make sure the cord is rated for the product to be plugged. Also check whether the extension cord is rated for interior or exterior use.
- If using a space heater, purchase a heater with a thermostat and overheat protection settings. Position the heater on a solid, flat surface. Plug the space heater directly into the wall, never use an extension cord. Make sure to turn off and unplug the space heater before leaving the room or going to bed. Never block an exit or place a space heater in normal foot traffic.
- Keep all objects at least three feet away from heating units such as baseboard heating, floor heating, and space heaters.
- Never use an oven to heat your home. There are many dangers associated with doing this, one being the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Always watch for recalls on electrical items in your home. If an item in your home gets recalled, discontinue use immediately and contact the manufacturer.
- If you smoke, be sure and take precautions. Never smoke in a home where oxygen is being used. Before throwing butts and ashes in a trash can, douse them with water. Make sure to use deep sturdy ash trays. It is safest to smoke outside.
- Keep lighters and matches away from children's reach and heat sources such as ovens and heaters. Children should be well informed about the dangers associated with these items.
- It is a good idea to have the dryer duct cleaned once or twice a year, depending on usage. This cleaning should be done by a professional. Before each use, clean the removable lint filter. Also, use a damp cloth to clean the edges around the lint filter.

