



# Home Fire Safety

According to the Nation Fire Protection Agency, in 2002 the following statistics were reported regarding fires in the home:

- 401,000 fires (which is 77% of all fires) – a fire happened every 79 seconds
- 2670 deaths – a death happened every 156 minutes
- 14,050 injuries – an injury happened every 28 minutes
- \$6,055,000,000 in Property Loss

Although these statistics are startling, these figures are down from the previous year.

The best way to stop a fire before it happens is knowledge. There are many things that you can do to protect yourself, your family, and your property:

- 🚒 Install smoke detectors
  - Install a smoke detector on every level of the home and outside the sleeping areas.
  - Test the smoke detector monthly.
  - Replace batteries at twice a year.
  - There are smoke detectors available for the hearing impaired.
- 🚒 Have several fire extinguishers on hand
  - Recommend having a fire extinguisher mounted in the kitchen, garage/workshop, and near fireplaces/woodstoves.
  - Recommend the purchase of ABC-type extinguishers.
  - Learn how to use them.

- Fire Extinguishers are for small fires only. If there is a large fire, get out immediately and call 911 from another location.

### Develop an exit plan and **practice** them

- Prepare a floor plan of your home showing at least **2** exits out of each room.
- Sleep with your bedroom door closed. This will help hold back heat and smoke.
- Call 911 from another location.
- Have an agreed meeting place.
- DO NOT under any circumstances go back inside the home!

### Familiarize yourself with the hazards in your home

- Fireplaces
  - Insure that they are installed and maintained properly.
  - Use a screen to prevent sparks from flying out.
  - Do not store newspapers, kindling or matches near the fireplace.
  - Have your chimney inspected and cleaned prior to use each season.
  - Recommend the installation of a spark arrestor on the chimney. These also should be cleaned at the beginning of each burning season.
- Furnaces & Space Heaters
  - Insure that they are installed and maintained properly. Have them inspected by a professional prior to use each season.
  - Do not store newspapers, rags, boxes, etc. near a furnace, water heater, space heater, etc.
  - Only use space heaters when you are in the room. Never leave them unattended. Maintain 3' clearance around the space heater while in use.
  - Do not use an extension cord with a space heater. The space heater demands on a high amount of current to operate. Extension cords can melt and cause a fire.

- Clothes Dryer
  - Insure that the dryer is installed and maintained properly.
  - Dryers must be vented to the outside.
  - Clean the lint screen frequently to keep the airway free.
  
- Electrical Hazards
  - Do not use an extension cord in place of permanent wiring. If you need an extension cord please use a surge protector strip and be sure that it is plugged directly into the wall outlet.
  - Do not place extension cords under rugs
  - Do not overload a circuit – if a circuit breaker trips or fuse blows frequently, be sure to reduce the number of appliances on that line.
  - Do not use plug adapters – making multiple plugs out of one.
  - Be sure to use the right wattage light bulb for the appliance.
  
- Kitchen Hazards
  - Never leave cooking food unattended.
  - Never pour water on a grease fire – turn stove off and cover pan with lid.
  - Keep pot handles pointed to the back of the stove.
  - Never store items on top of stove.
  - Clean exhaust hood and duct regularly.
  
- Gasoline & Other Flammable or Combustible Liquids
  - Gasoline and other flammable or combustible liquids should be stored in approved safety containers. These containers should be stored outside the house.
  - Fuel equipment outside and start equipment 10 feet away from where it was fueled.
  - Never fill a hot lawn mower, snow blower or other equipment with a hot engine.

- Smoking

- You should never smoke in bed.
- Use large, deep ashtrays and empty them often.
- Never dump an ashtray into the trash without wetting the butts and ashes first.