

Cooking

Responsible annually for an average of 100,000 home fires, 400 deaths, 5,000 civilian injuries, and \$200 million in property damage



Safety measures:

- Never leave cooking food unattended.
- Keep combustible material and loose clothing away from open flames.
- Keep the appliance and cooking area clean.
- Use extra caution with cooking oils as they can ignite easily.
- Always turn the pan handle sideways.

Portable Heaters

Responsible annually for an average of 62,200 fires, 670 deaths, 1,550 civilian injuries, and \$909 million in property damage



Safety measures:

- Keep heaters a minimum of 36" away from combustibles.
- Plug directly into a wall outlet. Don't use an extension cord.
- Use only heaters with built-in high temperature and tip-over shutoff features.
- Do not use un-vented fuel-fired heaters indoors.
- Do not hang combustible items to dry over a heater.
- Turn off portable heaters when family members are sleeping or leave the house.
- Keep heaters out of high traffic areas and exit paths.

Candles

Responsible annually for an average of 23,600 home fires, 165 deaths, 1,525 civilian injuries, and \$300 million in property damage



Safety measures:

- Blow out candles before leaving the room.
- Keep candles away from items that can burn.
- Always use sturdy metal, glass or ceramic candle holders.
- Place candles out of reach of small children and pets.
- Use battery powered LED candles instead

Fireplace/Chimney/Flue

Responsible annually for an average of 25,000 home fires, 20-50 deaths, 90 civilian injuries, and \$126 million in property damage



Safety measures:

- Have your fireplace or wood stove inspected at least annually for deficiencies and creosote buildup. Repair and clean as necessary.
- For wood-burning purposes, choose only well-seasoned wood.
- Never burn paper or trash in your fireplace
- Use a fireplace screen.
- Keep furniture and other combustible items a minimum 36" away from the hearth.
- Never leave the fire unattended.
- Dispose of ashes in a metal container and place the container outside.
- Install a carbon monoxide (CO) detector.

Christmas Trees

Responsible annually for an average of 400 home fires, 10 deaths, 80 injuries, and \$15 million in property damage.



Safety measures:

- Do not use open flames or candles near a Christmas tree.
- Do not place the tree near heating vents, fireplaces, or other heat sources.
- The tree should be removed from the house whenever the needles or leaves fall off readily when a tree branch is shaken or if the needles are brittle and break when bent between the thumb and index finger. The tree should be checked daily for dryness.
- Check the water level daily. A 6' tree will consume approximately 1 gallon of water every two days. If it is not consuming water, then it is drying.
- Make sure the stand is secure and stable.
- Do not place the tree near an exit.
- Check the wiring and lights for defects before they are hung on the tree. Miniature lights are recommended, as they use less power and produce less heat.

Turkey Fryers

Can be Very dangerous



Safety measures:

- Only use fuel-fired fryer appliances outdoors, away from buildings and other combustibles.
- Never use this appliance on wooden decks or in garages.
- Make sure the appliance is placed on a flat level surface.
- Never leave the appliance unattended.
- Never place a frozen turkey in hot oil. Thaw the turkey first.
- Do not overfill the fryer.
- Never allow children or pets near the fryer. The oil can remain hot for several hours after the appliance is turned off.
- Keep a multi-purpose fire extinguisher nearby.



Clothes Dryers

Responsible annually for an average of 15,500 home fires, 10 deaths, 310 injuries, and \$84.4 million in property damage.

Safety measures:

- Clean the lint screen before every use.
- Clean out exhaust vents regularly and check for proper airflow.
- Use a smooth metal exhaust vent (avoid using foil or plastic venting).
- Use a cool-down cycle to prevent the possibility of spontaneous ignition.
- Do not dry clothing/fabric on which there is anything flammable (alcohol, cooking oils, gasoline, spot removers, dry-cleaning solvents, etc.).
- Cotton fabrics are susceptible to spontaneous ignition if they have interacted with oils even if they have been laundered with detergent. Any fabric that has been exposed to oils should be stored in a covered metal container.



Electrical

Safety measures:

- Replace electrical cords that show signs of damage, and never coil or walk on cords.
- Avoid using extension cords. Use a power strip with a built-in circuit breaker instead.
- Avoid overloading circuits.
- Have an electrician check your house if fuses blow or breakers trip frequently.
- Have an electrician check your house if you frequently experience dimming of lighting.



Gas Appliances

Safety measures:

- Ensure proper clearances to combustibles.
- Inspect the exhaust venting.
- Have a technician check the appliance if there is any doubt that it is working properly.
- Install a carbon monoxide (CO) detector.

Cigarettes

The leading cause of fire-related deaths

Safety measures:

- Always discard smoldering and spent cigarettes properly.
- Use large non-combustible deep and tip resistant ashtrays.
- Never smoke while using oxygen. Warn visitors not to smoke near you.
- Douse cigarettes with water before throwing them in the trash.



Juvenile

Safety measures:

- Place matches and lighters out of reach of children.
- If your child has experimented with fire, contact your local fire department for help before a tragedy occurs.



Have Working Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms are essential because they provide an early warning of a fire developing in your home. It is recommended you have a smoke alarm on every level of the home, in the immediate area outside of the sleeping rooms, and in every bedroom. If you discover your child will not wake to a traditional sounding alarm, consider installing a personalized parent voice alarm. Test smoke alarms frequently to ensure they are functioning. Properly placed and maintained smoke alarms increase your chances of surviving a fire by 50%.



Plan Ahead and Practice

Plan ahead. Talk with your family about evacuation of your home and establish a safe meeting place. Teach your children to crawl on the floor to avoid smoke and heat. Show them how to feel the door with the back of their hand and to not open the door if it is hot to the touch. Make sure you have two ways out of every sleeping room, and that the windows can be opened easily. If the primary route is blocked by smoke or fire, you may have to escape through a window. Conduct a fire drill at night to determine your child's response, and practice until it becomes routine. Sleep with bedroom doors closed to provide a barrier of protection from smoke and heat spreading into your bedrooms. Practice home escape drills with your family monthly.

Consider Fire Sprinklers

Consider having a residential fire sprinkler system installed in your home. They are designed to maintain a survivable environment. Your chances of surviving a fire approach 100% when fire sprinklers and smoke alarms are installed in your home.

Winter & Holiday Home Fire Safety Information



Medford Fire-Rescue Fire Marshal's Office

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For more information, contact the
Medford Fire Department Prevention Bureau or visit:
www.medfordfirerescue.org