

# SMOKE DETECTORS SAVE LIVES!

Smoke detectors are critically important! If you know any firefighters, just ask them about this. They will quickly tell you how important it is to have these life saving devices in your home. The more, the better. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends installing good quality smoke detectors in every bedroom and outside the sleeping areas as well. Additionally, you should install detectors on every level of your home. It's good practice to install detectors at the base of stairwells as well as the top of staircases too. Larger homes require more smoke detectors.

# CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Carbon monoxide detectors are extremely important as well. They should be placed on every level of your home that has a fuel burning appliance, such as furnaces, stove/oven, dryers and fire places. It's good practice to have them in bedrooms as well.

# HAVING A PRE-FIRE PLAN

Everyone should have a pre-fire plan in place. You should have two ways out of your house in case one way is blocked. Practice this plan frequently so that you can get out quickly. Remember to stay low to the ground and go quickly. Remember... seconds count! Have a designated meeting place outside your house.

Sleep with your bedroom doors closed, as a closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire.

When leaving a room with flames and smoke, try to close the door behind you. This serves to compartmentalize the fire and slow the spread.

# GOOD TO KNOW

Over the last ten years, there has been an alarming 20% increase in fire deaths, reversing a long-term decline of fire deaths.

Some types of newer furniture manufactured overseas has thin veneer overlaid atop compressed wood. This compressed wood contains waxes, adhesives, and different types of binders that can ignite easier, burns hotter, and emits more toxic smoke than solid wood furniture.

A 2005 Consumer Product Safety Commission survey of residential fires reported approximately 4.7 million home fires occurred annually in which the fire department was not notified. These types of unreported fires caused over 100,000 injuries and over 300 million dollars of property damage.

Nationwide, fire department call volumes are up, and staffing levels are down in many volunteer and some large professional departments. This can lead to delayed response times, that's why prevention is so important!



## 3 PILLARS OF SAFETY

- Education of Fire Prevention
- Early Detection
- Having a Pre-Fire Plan

# CHILDREN PLAYING WITH HEAT SOURCES

Children playing with heat sources account for about 2% of structure fires a year. Fire departments responded to over 8000 structure fires annually that are started with children playing with heat sources, resulting in hundreds of injuries, dozens of deaths and over 140 million dollars of property damage every year in the United States. The majority of these fires were in residential settings.

These types of fires have declined greatly since the 1990's when over 21,000 fires were caused by children playing with heat sources to 4,400 fires in 2018. Civilian deaths decreased by over 80% and injuries decreased a similar percentage. Research indicates that regulatory mandates requiring cigarette lighters to be child resistant were one of the primary reasons for the reduction of deaths, injuries and fires!

Fires that were started by children playing with heat sources tended to increase during the summer vacation months of June, July and August. Children have decidedly more opportunities to play with heat sources when they have fewer organized and structured activities such as school.

It is extremely important to keep sources of ignition such as disposable lighters and matches safely locked away from children, so please do so, if there are children in your household. Candles also should never be placed in children's bedroom. Be sure to always mention how dangerous matches and disposable lighters are to your children.

If you find that your child develops an urge to light up small fires PLEASE seek immediate medical attention by a Healthcare Professional. Most Fire Departments have resources to guide you on contacting the proper medical professionals and seek immediate help. Many Fire Departments also have Juvenile Fire Setter programs that can be utilized in conjunction with Mental Healthcare Professionals to help in these types of situations. So....please seek help from these resources if your child develops an urge to start fires.

# CANDLE FIRES

Candles are the 7th leading cause of home structure fires in the United States. Candles have the highest rate of injury at 92.8 per 1000 fires, this injury rate is nearly 3 times the overall rate of injury in residential structure fires and are responsible for over \$278,000,000.00 of property damage annually and result in over 600 injuries and many deaths nationwide every year. These fires are preventable!

Admittedly candles can provide a very pleasing illumination and aroma to any room, but it's important to understand how to reduce your risks regarding candles.

In November of 2015 a very large fire broke out at the famous John Hancock building located on Michigan Avenue in Chicago. The cause .... a lit candle. This fire caused 5 injuries and over \$1,000,000.00 worth of damage! Pets and children can accidentally knock over candles and they can easily ignite furniture and bedding in a very short time.

Here are some precautions and considerations that you should keep in mind when using candles.

First off .... Consider using battery powered candles. They have a wide variety of styles and some have a completely realistic appearance of a natural flame. They are a safer alternative to real candles and they are battery operated. If you desire a scent, then use a plug in fragrance dispenser.

60% of candles fires start because they were located too close to combustible materials like bedding, curtains or pillows. So make sure to locate candles at least 3 feet away from any combustible materials.

Make sure to place candles on a sturdy surface and have to candles placed in a glass or ceramic shroud or holder.

# CANDLE FIRES (CONT.)

Makes sure to keep loose clothing and hair away from the flame of a candle. Yes ..... this happens more than you think!

Keep candles away from medical oxygen as this puts you at a very high fire risk.

**MAKE SURE** to extinguish the candle when leaving a room so never leave a candle unattended. Having a candle burning in an upstairs bathroom while having a party is a very unsafe practice. Many candle fires start this way!

Never sleep with a candle burning.

Make sure to extinguish a candle before it reaches the bottom of the candle base, as this can cause the glass to break and spread a large flame.

Pets and small children can accidentally knock over a candle which, can roll underneath a sofa or chair and ignite easily.