

# Home Fire Prevention and Safety Checklist

Use this handy home fire prevention and safety checklist to do a room-by-room search for fire hazards in your home. Correct any hazards you find.

## Throughout Home

- Install smoke detectors on every level of the home in rooms, stair landings, and passageways. Test them monthly. Change batteries twice a year.
- Consider installing automatic fire sprinklers to spray water on fire in its early stages to reduce or stop damage.
- Put out cigarettes in an ashtray. Never throw them in the trash. Make sure they are completely out.
- Keep all lighters and matches in locked or high cabinets away from children.
- Use light bulbs with the correct wattage for the fixture.
- Replace all frayed, cracked or broken electrical cords.
- Check for independent testing lab safety labels (i.e., UL, FM) on all appliances and portable heaters.
- Use outlets safely. Don't plug too many large appliances into one outlet, overload an extension cord, or plug more than one extension cord into an outlet.
- Make sure there are two escape routes from every room, including basement bedrooms.
- Store and use all cleaning products and aerosol cans away from heat. Don't burn the containers or throw in trash that will be burned.
- Do not use electrical appliances or tools when you or the cord is in or near the water.

## Kitchen

- Have stovetop and oven checked annually to be sure they are working properly.
- Keep the stovetop and oven clean to avoid grease fires.
- Remove towels, potholders, plastic bags, newspapers and other flammable materials around the stovetop.
- Do not hang curtains or other flammable materials above the stove.
- Replace or have a professional fix any appliance with frayed or loose cords or wires, or cords that get hot while appliance is in use.
- Do not use or store appliances and cords near water where they can get wet.
- Hang paper towel racks, curtains and towels away from the toaster, toaster oven, and any other heat-producing appliances.
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stovetop.
- Use only microwave-safe dishes in the microwave.
- Wear tight-fitting sleeves or roll them up when cooking.
- Unplug appliances when not in use.

## Living Room

- Clean wood or coal stoves and fireplace chimneys before each heating season.

- Burn only dry, seasoned wood in the fireplace or wood stove to reduce the buildup of creosote - which is flammable - in the chimney.
- Close the screen or heat-tempered glass door when the fireplace is in use to prevent sparks from igniting furniture, draperies or other items.
- Avoid running cords or wires under rugs and carpets or near a heat source where they can overheat. Don't run them across doorways where they can become worn.
- Stack newspapers, wood, matches and other items that might catch fire away from fireplace or wood or coal stove.
- Install approved stove board under wood and coal stoves and place these stoves at least 3 feet away from any wall. Follow local building and fire codes.
- Place large, clean, deep, non-tip ashtrays in the living room and other rooms where smokers are likely to be. Douse ashtrays with water before emptying to put out embers.

### **Bathroom**

- Run appliance cords away from sink or tub where they can get wet.
- Install Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) in the bathroom, kitchen, and other rooms with water or moisture. These shut off the current when there is a danger of shock.
- Use hair dryers and curling irons away from items that might burn. Disconnect after use. Don't fold or crimp cords when storing.

### **Bedrooms**

- Install a smoke detector in the hallway near each bedroom. Sleep with bedroom doors closed.
- Buy portable heaters with automatic shutoff safety features. Keep them clean and at least three feet away from draperies, furniture, clothes, bedding or walls.
- Never smoke cigarettes in bed or any time you are sleepy.
- Use a heating pad for no more than 30 minutes. Unplug when finished.
- Unplug your electric blanket when not in use and store flat. Never fold or roll it.

### **Basement/Utility Room**

- Have your furnace checked before each heating season to be sure it is in proper working condition.
- Change furnace filters frequently.
- If you use the basement as a bedroom make sure windows are large enough to crawl through in case of fire.
- Do not store trash and anything that could catch fire near the furnace.
- Become familiar with your main electric panel. Check for proper wiring and fuses.
- Clean lint from dryer screen before each use. Plug dryer into a separate outlet and vent to the outside. Keep the area clear.
- Follow manufacturers' recommended time for drying synthetic fabrics, rubber, plastics, or foam.