

HOME FIRE SAFETY from Maryland Heights Fire District

PRECAUTIONS TO PROMOTE HOME FIRE SAFETY

Make sure all family members know what to do in the event of a fire. Draw a floor plan with at least two ways of escaping from every room. Make a drawing for each floor. The drawing dimensions do not need to be correct. Make sure the plan shows important details: stairs, hallways and windows that can be used as fire escape routes.

Test windows and doors—do they open easy enough? Are they wide or tall enough?

Choose a safe meeting place outside the house.

Practice your escape plan. It is a good idea to keep a whistle and flashlight in each bedroom.

Conduct a family meeting and discuss the following topics:

- Always sleep with the bedroom doors closed. This will keep deadly heat and smoke out of the bedrooms, allowing additional time to escape.
- Find a way for everyone to sound a family alarm. Yelling, pounding on the walls, whistles, etc. Practice yelling “**Fire!**”
- In a real fire, time is critical. Don’t waste time getting dressed; don’t search for pets or valuables. Just get out!
- Roll out of bed. Stay low. One breath of smoke or gases may be enough to kill.

Practice evacuating the building blindfolded. In a real fire situation, the amount of smoke generated by a fire will make it difficult to see.

Practice staying low to the ground when escaping.

Feel all doors before opening them. If a door is hot, get out another way.

Learn to STOP, DROP to the ground, and ROLL if clothes catch fire.

Install Smoke Detectors

Check smoke detectors once a month and change the batteries at least once a year. Smoke detectors sense abnormal amounts of smoke or invisible combustion gases in the air. They can detect both smoldering and fast burning fires. At least one smoke detector should be installed on every level of a structure. Purchase smoke detectors labeled by the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) or Factory Mutual (FM).

Post Emergency Numbers Near Telephones

Be aware that if a fire threatens your home, you should not place the call to the fire department from inside your home. It is better to get out and place the call from a neighbor's house.

After a Fire Emergency

Give first aid where appropriate. Seriously injured victims should be transported to a medical facility. In the Maryland Heights Fire Protection District, an ambulance is dispatched on all actual structure fires. Stay out of the damaged building and return only when you know it is safe.

Make Sure You Have a Safe Fire Escape Method for All Situations

You may have installed a very expensive home security system. But if you cannot escape the burning structure you have a false level of confidence.

Space Heaters Need Space

Keep portable and space heaters at least 3 feet from anything that may burn. Never leave heaters on when you leave your home or go to sleep. Children and pets should always be kept away from them.

Smokers Need to be Extra Careful

Never smoke in bed or when you are sleepy. Carelessly discarded cigarettes are a leading cause of fire deaths in the U. S.

Be Careful Cooking

Keep cooking areas clear of combustibles and wear short or tight fitting sleeves when you cook. Keep the handles of your pots turned inward so they do not over-hang the stove. If grease catches fire, turn the burner off and carefully slide a lid over the pan to smother the flames. Do not use water as it will often react violently with the burning grease and may spread the fire.

Matches and Lighters are Dangerous

In the hands of a child, matches and lighters can be deadly! Store them where kids can't reach them, preferably in a locked area. Teach children that matches and lighters are "Tools" and should only be used by a grown up.

Use Electricity Safely

If an appliance smokes or has an unusual smell, unplug it immediately and have it repaired. Replace frayed or cracked cords and do not overload extension cords. They should not be run under rugs. Never tamper with the circuit breaker box.

Cool A Burn

If someone gets burned, immediately place the wound under cool water for 10 to 15 minutes. If the burn has blisters or has charred, seek medical attention immediately. Never use ice water to cool a burn.

Be Careful with Halogen Lights

If you have halogen lights, make sure they are away from flammable drapes and low ceiling areas. Never leave them on when you leave.

FIRE CAN ENGULF A HOUSE IN 60 SECONDS...MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A SAFE AND QUICK METHOD OF ESCAPE!!!