

MARYLAND HEIGHTS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

SAFETY TIPS ABOUT MATCHES

CHILDREN AND FIRE

Every year, hundreds of children throughout the world die in home fires started by children who were using or playing with matches or lighters. Many of the children were merely being curious, some set fires deliberately as an act of vandalism.

Children have a normal and healthy fascination with fire. If your children express curiosity about fire or if you find they have been playing with matches or lighters, respond calmly. Explain firmly to your child that matches and lighters are tools for adults to use carefully. Find safe ways to let your child participate in your careful use of fire. For example, let them blow out candles or put charcoal in the barbecue before you light it. As children mature, they can learn how to use matches and lighters safely but only under adult supervision.

KEEP MATCHES AND LIGHTERS AWAY FROM CHILDREN

Children as young as two years old have started fires with matches and lighters. If there are children in your house, treat matches and lighters as you would treat a dangerous weapon. Store them up high, out of children's reach, and preferably in a locked cabinet.

Teach young children that if they see matches or lighters they should not touch them, but tell a grown up where they are. On the other hand, school-age children should be taught to bring matches or lighters to an adult so the hazard can be removed.

DON'T LEAVE CHILDREN UNATTENDED

Unsupervised children can sometimes get their hands on matches and lighters that are well hidden. They may go looking for them or they may know where you hide them.

IF YOU SMOKE

Each year, careless smokers start many house fires. These fires cost millions of dollars in property loss and hundreds of lives.

Check for Hidden Embers:

- Cigarettes can smolder under chair or sofa cushions for several hours. That's long enough for the whole family to be asleep before the fire starts.
- Before leaving a room where people have been smoking, check in and around furniture for hot embers, ashes, butts or matches.

Use Ashtrays:

- To reduce the risk of cigarettes starting a fire, use plenty of large, deep ashtrays on hand and empty them often.

- Fill them with water before dumping cigarette butts into wastebaskets.
- A lit cigarette left in an ashtray is a fire hazard. As it burns down, it can easily roll out of the ashtray and cause a fire.

NEVER smoke in bed!!!

JUST REMEMBER

Fires started by matches and lighter claim many lives each year. Most of those deaths could be prevented by a few simple precautions:

- Store matches and lighters out of children's reach
- Teach children that matches and lighters are tools for adults, not toys
- If you suspect your child is setting fires, get help immediately. Contact your local fire department.
- If you smoke, use great caution and check for smoldering cigarettes or embers before leaving a room.

FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION....THE BEST FIRE PREVENTION