

MARYLAND HEIGHTS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

HOME FIRE INSPECTIONS

One of the best ways to prevent fire in the home is to do a home inspection specifically looking for fire hazards or preparing for emergency measures in case of a fire. Inspect your home one section at a time:

KITCHEN

All electrical appliances and tools should have a testing agency label. Have the appliances repaired if they aren't working right. If an appliance gets wet, have it serviced.

- Check the cords on all appliances. If they are worn or frayed, have them repaired.
- Don't overload the outlets.
- Make sure appliance cords are kept on the counter to prevent them from being pulled down by young children.
- Don't store things over the stove. People get burned while reaching.
- Turn pot handles so children can't pull them down.
- Wear tight sleeves when cooking. Loose-fitting garments can catch fire.
- Check to see if curtains or towel racks are close to the stove. If they are, move them away from the area of the heat.
- Check to see if the stove and oven are clean of grease and oil buildup.
- Be sure a fire extinguisher is placed in the kitchen (minimum rating of 2A10BC).
- All cleaning products and other chemicals should be stored out of the reach of young children, not under the sink. Cleaning products and other chemicals also should be stored separately from foods.
- Be sure microwave ovens have room to "breathe" and that all the vents are clear of obstructions.

LIVING ROOM OR FAMILY ROOM

- Be sure portable space heaters are at least three feet away from anything that can catch fire including walls and curtains.
- Use a metal or glass fireplace screen. Have the chimney checked and cleaned regularly.
- Too small or too full ashtrays are dangerous. Ashtrays should be large, deep and emptied frequently, but only when all signs of heat and burning are gone.
- Before going to bed, look under cushions for burning cigarettes. Check carpeting where ashtrays have been used.
- Allow plenty of air space around the TV and stereo to prevent overheating. If these appliances are not working correctly, be sure to have them repaired. In the meantime, unplug them.
- Check for worn or frayed extension cords.
- Electrical sockets should be covered with a childproofing fitting.

- Lamp and light fixtures should use bulbs with wattage at or below the maximum prescribed by the manufacturer.

BATHROOM

- Check for overloaded extension cords and outlets.
- Don't place or use any appliance near water.
- Make sure all medicines and cosmetics are kept out of the reach of small children.
- Install safety latches on drawers, cupboards and medicine cabinets if the home has small children.
- Dump old or outdated medicine into the toilet and flush.

BEDROOMS

- Smoke detectors should be tested regularly to be sure they are functioning correctly.
- Have a working flashlight next to each bed.
- Again, check for overloaded outlets, extension cords and heaters that are too close to combustible items.
- Each member of the family should know what to do in the event of a fire.
- Do all family members know the fire escape plan?
- Plan two escapes from each bedroom in case of a fire.
- If you smoke, **DO NOT** smoke in bed.

BASEMENT, GARAGE AND STORAGE

- Store gasoline and other flammable in tight metal containers. Don't use flammable liquids near heat, a pilot light or while smoking.
- Have heating equipment checked yearly.
- Clean up workbench.
- If a circuit blows, find the problem. Be sure to reset the fuse later on.
- Don't store things near the furnace or heater.
- Get rid of stored newspaper or other rubbish. Newspapers stored in a damp, warm place may ignite spontaneously.
- Oily, greasy rags should be kept in labeled and sealed non-glass containers, preferably metal.
- Keep chemicals, paints, etc. in their original containers.
- Set your water heater to 130 degrees Fahrenheit.

OUTDOORS

- Is your roof fire retardant? Whether it is asphalt shingle, shake shingle, tile or slate, roofing material can be treated with fire retardant material.
- Don't ever use gasoline on a grill. Once the fire has been started, never use lighter fluid or gasoline. Use dry kindling to revive the fire.
- Move the lawnmower away from gasoline fumes before starting. Allow the engine to cool before refueling.
- Installing a lightning protection system.

- Don't store more of any chemical, paint, or flammable liquids than what you absolutely need.