

# Fire Safety Tips

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\* **Smoke detectors save lives!** Make sure your smoke detectors are in good working order, and change the batteries once a year. Smoke detectors should be placed in the hallway outside sleeping areas, and in every bedroom. As of 2012, all rental units are required to have smoke detectors in both the hallway and every bedroom.

\* **Be careful cooking!** Make sure that the cooking area is free of clutter and combustibles. Never leave the cooking area unattended. Always have a fire extinguisher available in an easily accessible location. When cooking on the stove top always turn the handles of your pots and pans inward so that children cannot pull them over the edge. If a grease fire occurs carefully place a lid on the pan to smother the fire and call 911.

\* **Practice candle safety!** You should never leave a lit candle unattended in any room of the house. Make sure not to burn a candle near any combustible materials such as curtains, drapes, and bedding. Always extinguish all candles before going to bed at night.

\* **Practice your escape plan in case of a fire** Have a meeting place outside of the home, such as a neighbor's yard, to insure that all members of the house are safe and accounted for. Also, once you have made your way out of the house **NEVER** go back inside.

\* **Use electricity safely!** If an appliance begins to smoke or smell unusual, unplug it immediately and have it repaired. Make sure that all electrical cords are in good working order, free of cracks and frays, and never run cords under rugs, up walls, or across ceilings for any reason. When using multi-plug adapters, never plug two together, or run an extension cord off of it.

\* **Educate your children** Teach your children what they should do in case of a fire. If they wake up at night and smell smoke they should get as low as they can to the floor and make their way to the door. Before opening the door they should feel the door with the back of their hand to see if it is hot. If the door isn't hot they may proceed out and make their way to your designated meeting area outside of the house. If it is hot, they should go out secondary escape route (window). Also make sure they know to call 911 in case of an emergency.

\* **Smokers be careful!** Never smoke in bed or if you are sleepy. If you know a smoker who is impaired, teach them to place cigarette between their middle and ring finger. This method will ensure that if they become distracted, or fall asleep, the cigarette will not fall. Carelessly discarded cigarettes are one of the leading causes of house fires.

\* **Fireplaces.** Only use firewood or approved fire logs in a fireplace, never finished lumber. Never use flammable liquids such as gasoline, or charcoal lighter fluid to start the fire. Have the flue checked by a licensed technician periodically to make sure there are no openings that could cause a fire in the walls or attic.

\* **Firewood** should never be stored against a building, close to an exit (door or window), or under a stairwell (apartment). Fire logs should be used ONE at a time. Multiple logs can create tremendous heat, overwhelm a flue, and start a fire rapidly in the walls or attic.

\* **Barbeque.** Make sure the grill is at least ten (10) feet away from the house or apartment (fire code). Apartment dwellers cannot use any flame producing devices (grills) on patios (fire code). Never use gasoline or other flammable liquids to start a fire. Dispose of ashes from charcoal grills responsibly