



HOWE SPRINGS FIRE DISTRICT
DIVISION OF FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY

Fire Prevention Information for Residential Properties

Smoke Alarms:

Installing smoke alarms in your home is the single most important action you can take to increase your survival if you have to escape a burning home. Recent information now says that smoke alarms can increase your chances of escaping a burning home by 75% with proper installation. Smoke alarms should be mounted in every room of the home except the kitchen and bathroom. Smoke alarms should be properly maintained by testing them once a month and changing the battery once a year (except ten year lithium battery smoke alarms). A good time to change your batteries is when you change your clocks for daylight saving time.

Home Escape Plan:

When a fire occurs in a home, there is no time to think about what actions should be taken. A plan should be written down, discussed with the occupants of the home, and practiced at least twice a year. The home escape plan should include having two ways out of every room, crawling low in smoke, establishing a meeting place outside and away from the house and a safe place to call the fire department. You should never re-enter a burning home for any reason—pets, possessions or even family members.

Candles and Other Open Flames:

Candles and other open flame products require great care when being used. Candles should be burned in a deep-dish container or globe with a non-combustible mat or tray under it. Matches and lighters should be stored away from areas where a child may be able to reach them. To prevent embers from spreading to combustible areas, candles should not be blown out but extinguished using a flame snuffer.

Cooking:

Cooking related fires are the leading cause for property losses; they also contribute as a leading cause of injuries. Unattended cooking is often the cause for cooking fires. Burns often occur when people try unsuccessfully to extinguish a fire. You should always stay in the kitchen when cooking. If you have to leave the kitchen at any time, you should turn all cooking appliances off. When cooking, you should never wear loose fitting clothes that could hang over the stovetop or oven heating element. Children should not be allowed to cook or be in the kitchen unsupervised while cooking.

Heating:

Heating is a leading cause of fires and fire deaths. Portable heating devices are often the cause of fires due to misuse or lack of maintenance. These devices, when bought, should have a national testing laboratory seal on them. Portable heating devices require a minimal of three feet space clear of any combustibles. Children and pets should be closely supervised when using these devices. Any home heating device requires maintenance, fireplace chimney, oil burning and electric HVAC or any home other home heating device. Maintenance schedules should be based on frequency of use.

Electrical:

Fires associated with electrical wiring or appliances are still a leading cause for property and life losses. Old or frayed wiring is often the cause of these fires. Electrical wires running under rugs along high traffic areas , improper wiring or insulation and over-loading circuits are often the causes of these types of fires. You should limit the number of electrical devices plugged into an outlet; dedicated high amp appliances should be on a dedicated circuit and surge protectors should be used for multiple components such as computers, printers, home theaters, etc.

Drugs and Alcohol:

Impaired judgment while under the influence of drugs and alcohol has often been associated with fire deaths. The inability to escape a burning structure due to a state of unconsciousness or lack of coordination has often contributed to starting a fire or enabling escape.

Fire & Life Safety Links

[Home Safety Council Safety Guide](#)

[Fire Safety.gov](#)

Links for Kids

[Sparky the Fire Dog](#)

[USFA Kids](#)