

# FIRE PREVENTION

---

Every year, fire departments respond to more than 300,000 home structure fires in the U.S. Most residential fires can be prevented by educating yourself and your family on the common causes of household fires and how to prevent them from occurring.

## ***The following tips will help keep you, your family, and your home safe:***

- Do not overload electrical circuits with too many appliances or electronics. If your circuit breakers are tripping, call in a work order for maintenance to look at your system.
- Do not run extension cords under rugs or carpets. The cords wear easily and may short out, causing a fire.
- Nails or staples used to attach electrical cords to the walls or baseboards can damage the cords and cause fire or shock hazards. Tape cords to walls or floors instead of using nails or staples.
- Replace frayed electrical cords before they burn or cause a fire.
- Keep combustibles away from the furnace, which can emit flames or sparks. Mechanical rooms must be kept clear and may not be used as storage areas for any item.
- Ceiling fixtures and recessed lights trap heat. Since overheating can lead to fire, don't use a high-wattage bulb in such a fixture. If you don't know the correct wattage, use a bulb of 60 or fewer watts.
- Always extinguish candles before leaving the house and before going to bed.
- Unplug your hair dryer or any other small appliance in the bathroom when not in use.
- An electric blanket should not be tucked in at the sides. It may overheat and start a fire.
- Be sure to turn a heating pad off before you go to sleep. It can cause burns even at a relatively low setting.
- Do not remove or tamper with your smoke / CO alarm. If it is beeping or chirping, call in a work order to have it checked.
- If a switch or outlet is damaged during use, stop using it immediately and call in a work order to have it repaired.

## REFERENCES

<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/>  
<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/fire.html>  
<https://www.fire-extinguisher101.com/using.html>

# FIRE PREVENTION

---

## General Cooking

Annually, more than 150,000 house fires start in the kitchen, making it one of the most dangerous rooms in your home. To be safe, you have to watch your food. The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking. So, if you're cooking, stay in the kitchen, and if you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.

### ***Some other important tips that will help keep you and your family safe:***

- Understand that most items are flammable, so keep anything that can catch fire away from the stove and oven unit. Remember, potholders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper or plastic bags, food packaging, towels, or curtains are all a fire hazard when left close to a flame or electric coil.
- It's best to wear clothes with short or rolled-up sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing and long hair can dangle and catch fire if it comes into contact with a gas flame or electric burner.
- If your clothes catch fire, stop, drop, and roll. Stop immediately, drop to the ground, and cover your face with your hands. Roll over and over or back and forth to put out the fire. Immediately cool the burn with cool water for three to five minutes and cover with a clean, dry cloth. Don't apply creams, ointments, sprays, or other home remedies.
- If you have a fire extinguisher in your kitchen, make sure you know how to use it. However, only use a fire extinguisher if the fire is considered small. Also, have the pan lid cover handy and use it to cover the pan if possible.

## Cooking With Grease

Frying food poses the greatest risk of life-threatening fires in your home. In fact, 43 percent of cooking fires in 2010 started with cooking oil. That same year, someone died in a fire every 169 minutes and was injured every 30 minutes. Best bet, don't cook with grease; it's healthier and safer to bake or grill food. Grease fires are the #1 cause of all kitchen fires. ***If you do have a grease fire, use oven mitts/potholders and cover the pan/pot with a lid or flat cookie sheet and turn off stove.***

- NEVER USE WATER as this will create a larger fire.
- Keep combustible items away from oil that is heating. If water spills into a pan of hot grease, it will immediately turn into steam and violently spew out hot grease and fire in all directions.
- Make sure that no liquids are sitting close to the cooking area.
- Don't drink near the stove or keep cups of coffee or cans of soda too close either.
- Use extra caution when cooking with deep fryers. Plan the placement of the unit in an area where it cannot be struck/bumped and inadvertently tipped over which could result in serious burn injuries and a fire. Be careful that the cord is not placed where it can be snagged or pulled by children, pets, or others passing by.

# FIRE PREVENTION

---

## Electrical Cord Safety

While enjoying electric TVs, radios, and other appliances, we may forget these appliances have the potential to cause electrical shocks and fires. Annually, damaged plugs, cords, switches, and outlets caused about 24,000 home fires and over 300 deaths. But most electrical fires and injuries can be prevented.

### ***It's important to remember these safety tips when dealing with electrical cords:***

- Never place electric cords under rugs or bedding; heat or sparks from these cords could cause a fire. Follow all safety tips on new appliances and check electrical cords for signs of wear. Replace frayed or cracked cords to prevent shocks and fires.
- Repair electrical problems right away. If fuses blow often, circuit breakers trip often, switches get hot, or people are shocked, something is wrong and immediate action is needed.
- An easy way to prevent electrical fires is to make sure you DON'T overload outlets. Extension cords should be of the proper size and rating. As a general rule, do not add plug outlet strips as these could lead to overload and electrical fire.
- If you need help with any mechanical or electrical issue at your home, call our maintenance service line immediately.

## Extinguisher Tips

We hope you never experience a fire in your home. Prevention of fires is always the best option. However, if you do experience a fire, fire extinguishers are an essential tool to control and help prevent the spread of fire in your home. Now is the time for you and your family to become familiar with how to operate your fire extinguisher. Although there are many different types of fire extinguishers, all of them operate in a similar manner; be sure to read the instructions.

### ***If your home is equipped with a fire extinguisher, remember these tips below:***

- Use a portable fire extinguisher when the fire is confined to a small area and is not growing; everyone has exited the building; the fire department has been called or is being called, and the room is not filled with smoke. To operate a fire extinguisher, remember the word PASS:
  - *Pull the pin. Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you and release the locking mechanism.*
  - *Aim low. Point the extinguisher at the base of the fire.*
  - *Squeeze the lever slowly and evenly.*
  - *Sweep the nozzle from side-to-side.*
- For additional fire extinguishers in the home, select a multi-purpose extinguisher (can be used on all types of home fires) that is large enough to put out a small fire, but not so heavy as to be difficult to handle.
- Read the instructions that come with the fire extinguisher and become familiar with its parts and operation before a fire breaks out. Local fire departments or fire equipment distributors often offer hands-on fire extinguisher trainings.