

# FIRE SAFETY

*and aging*



**Fire is Hot • Fire is Fast**  
Survive through preparedness and prevention



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*knowledge that could save your life*

# Live Freely Knowing You Are Fire Safe!

*Every year in the United States, nearly four thousand people die in fires and another twenty seven thousand are injured. Adults age 65 and older are more likely to be injured or killed in a fire than any other age group. Here are a few simple tips to protect yourself and the people that depend on you from the dangers of fire.*

## First Understand What Makes Fire So Deadly?

- **Fire is FAST:** Fire can double in size every 30 seconds
- **Fire is HOT:** Temperatures in a fire can reach well over 1000o F
- **Fire gives off Deadly Smoke and Gases:** Carbon monoxide and Hydrogen cyanide are just a few of the gases that are produced in a fire. These gases will affect your ability to escape. Most people that die in fires die from the smoke and gases.

## Tips On Preventing A Fire!

- Never leave cooking unattended. If you need to leave the kitchen when cooking, shut off the cooking appliances or take something with you to remind you the stove is on. It only takes seconds for a fire to occur. When cooking appliances are in use make sure the area around them are clear of paper and other combustibles that can burn. Avoid wearing loose sleeves around cooking appliance that can easily catch on fire if they come to close to heating elements.
- Careless smoking is one of the leading causes of fire deaths in older adults. Never smoke in bed or when drowsy. Use large, stable ash trays and make sure they are on a secure surface. Soak smoking materials thoroughly in water before disposing of them. Extra word of caution: When using oxygen cylinders to assist with breathing problems, do not smoke. This can lead to serious burns or death.
- Use care when operating portable heaters, wood stoves and fire places. Make sure paper and other combustible materials are kept at least 3' from these heating appliances.
- Don't overload electrical outlets. Avoid the use of extension cords whenever possible and if you do use them make sure they are heavy enough to handle the load they are being used for. Never run electrical cords under carpets, this can damage them and cause a fire.

## Plan Ahead to Get Out Alive!

- Make sure all smoke detectors are working! Early warning of a fire is critical to getting out alive. Check the batteries in smoke detectors once a month and change the batteries twice a year. Smoke detectors should be located in sleeping rooms as well as outside sleeping rooms and on every level of the home.
- Develop a home escape plan and know two ways out from every room.
- Make sure exit routes are kept clear to reduce the risk of tripping when trying to make a quick escape.
- Make sure windows, doors and security bars open and close and operate freely.
- Keep a flashlight by the bed

## If A Fire Should Occur

- -Feel the door
  - If the door is hot don't open it. Keep it closed to help keep the smoke out.
  - Use your second way out, or go to a window and call for help. Hang or wave something like a sheet from the window to get attention
  - If the door is cool, stay low and open it slowly
  - Check for smoke and fire before going out
- Crawl low under smoke
- Yell "fire" as you leave to alert others
- Never use an elevator during a fire
- Call 911, or the appropriate emergency number, from a safe place outside the building. Never go back in for anything!

## Get Out & Stay Out!

\*Contact your local fire department if you have questions on developing a home escape plan or need a hand changing the batteries in you smoke detector. Remember, they are there to protect and serve you!