

News & Notes

HOME SMOKE DETECTORS

Fire alarms are the number one lifesaver when it comes to fires in the home. **In fact, two-thirds of all fire deaths occur in homes with either no working smoke alarm, or no alarm period.** Utilizing the following tips will drastically reduce the chances of a deadly fire in your home:

- There are two types of alarms: ionization (better at detecting "flaming" fires) and photoelectric (better at detecting "smoldering" fires). Ionization is the most common, as it's cheaper and can detect minute amounts of smoke. Your absolute safest bet is to get a dual sensor alarm that utilizes both technologies.
- Make sure alarms are installed in every bedroom, and outside every sleeping area. Also be sure there's at least one on every floor, including the basement.
- Test your alarms (all of them!) monthly by hitting the "test" button. If the alarm doesn't work, first replace the battery and try again. If it still doesn't work, replace the entire alarm.
- Replace the batteries in all your smoke alarms once a year. If an alarm starts chirping with a low battery signal, replace it immediately; don't just disconnect it in hopes that you'll remember to do it later.
- Replace the alarm itself every 10 years or when the "test" button fails, whichever comes first.
- Do not disconnect when cooking. Cooking is the leading cause of home fires, especially around the holidays when ovens and stovetops are used all day long. If the alarm goes off, the tendency can be to just disconnect it for the time being. Instead, turn on your range fan, put a fan near the alarm, open windows, etc.



"It's a conflict between your hardware and your software. Your cauldron won't support Eye Of Newt 3.0."

HALLOWEEN RIDDLES

- 1) What do you call a skeleton that makes you laugh and giggle when you are sad?
- 2) A zombie and a mummy have a new house. It has all the rooms most houses have except one. Which one?
- 3) Where do ghosts, zombies and mummies love to go swimming?
- 4) I have a body, legs and arms but no guts. What am I?

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Safety Matters



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October is Fire Prevention Month – 12 Fire Safety Tips for the Workplace

The following 12 tips can help maintain fire safety in the workplace:

- 1) Accessibility** - Provide full accessibility to electrical control panels. Never block the panels, which are used to shut down power in an emergency, with materials or other equipment. Also, never block sprinklers, firefighting equipment or emergency exits and observe clearances when stacking materials.
- 2) Good Housekeeping** - Clutter not only provides fuel for fires but also prevents access to exits and emergency equipment. Keep your workplace as clutter-free as possible and ensure equipment and other materials are properly stored.
- 3) Proper Waste Disposal** - Discard fire hazards like oily rags by placing them in a covered metal container and emptying it on a regular basis.
- 4) Maintenance** - Make sure the machines in your workplace are properly maintained to prevent overheating and friction sparks. Make sure machines are kept as dirt/dust free as possible as these can be combustible. Check and perform maintenance on machines regularly and keep a record of this routine maintenance.
- 5) Report Electrical Hazards** - Unless you are qualified and authorized, you should never attempt electrical repairs. Faulty wiring and malfunctioning electrical equipment are key contributors to workplace fires. If you notice something does not look right, immediately notify the proper person in your facility.
- 6) Safe Chemical Use & Storage** - Always read the label and the Safety Data Sheet to assess flammability and other fire hazards of a substance. When using and storing chemical materials, always do so in an area with adequate ventilation. Employees should have and wear the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) for handling hazardous materials.
- 7) Precautions In Explosive Atmospheres** - Follow all recommended and required precautions to prevent ignition in potentially explosive atmospheres, such as those containing flammable liquid vapors or fine particles. These precautions include non-sparking tools and proper static electricity control.
- 8) Maximum Building Security** - To help prevent arson fires, always lock up as instructed, report suspicious persons or behavior and never leave combustible garbage outside or near your building.
- 9) No Smoking Facilities** - Since all State facilities are non-smoking facilities please ensure that if you are a smoker you adhere to the policy of the State of Delaware. If you see someone smoking on State property remind them of the No Smoking guidelines.
- 10) Fully Charged Fire Extinguishers** - Check fire extinguishers often by looking at the gauges and making sure they're fully charged and ready for use. If they're not fully charged or if the attached inspection tag is out of date, call for maintenance. All fire extinguishers should be checked by building maintenance on a monthly basis (and initialed on the rear of the attached inspection card) and by the fire extinguisher service provider yearly (the front of the inspection tag should be punched or marked with the month/year of the most recent inspection).
- 11) Emergency Numbers and Proper Signage** - Emergency phone numbers, as well as your location address, should be posted by every phone station for quick access. It is important to provide dialing directions and whether a phone has outside line capability. Many phones are restricted or require different prefixes to obtain outside lines. Make sure you have exit signs installed in your facility and a fire evacuation plan in the event of an emergency.
- 12) Fire Drills and Evacuation Plan** - Supervisors should make sure everyone knows what the proper fire evacuation procedures are. Fire drills should be conducted at least twice a year. There must be a designated spot where employees are directed to meet once they exit the building. Attendance should be taken to insure all employees are accounted for after evacuation.

Safety Bits & Pieces

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Having fire extinguishers in your home and knowing how to use them is a crucial part of your home's emergency plan. While it can be tempting to use an extinguisher for any fire in your home, you have to be aware of the fact that **they should really only be used for fires that are very small and contained** — for example in a wastebasket or a small fire in a pot on the stovetop.

You should have at least one fire extinguisher on every level of your home. They should be placed in the rooms with the highest probability of a fire — the kitchen and the garage. While there are multiple classifications of extinguishers, the variety that are classified as "ABC" will be fine for the majority of homeowners' needs. Remember that fires double in size every 60 seconds, so:

- **First, determine if the fire is one you can handle with your extinguisher.** If it's taller than you, or the room is filled with smoke, get everyone out of the house.
- **Position yourself with your back to an escape, so you can make a quick getaway if necessary.** Don't back yourself into a corner with just an extinguisher in hand.
- **Adhere to the PASS method when using a fire extinguisher:**

Pull the pin.

Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire. Hitting the tops of the flame with the extinguisher won't be effective. You've got to smother the fire at its base.

Squeeze the trigger in a controlled manner, to release the agent.

Sweep from side to side. Sweep the nozzle from side to side until the fire is put out. Keep aiming at the base while you do so. Most extinguishers will give you about 10-20 seconds of discharge time.

HALLOWEEN RIDDLES ANSWERS

- 1) A funny bone.
- 2) The living room.
- 3) The Dead Sea.
- 4) A Skeleton!

SAFETY TIPS OF THE MONTH

October is Home Eye Safety Month. Every year, there are several hundred eye injuries related to costumes and masks treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms. Follow these tips to protect your loved ones:

- 1) Avoid costumes with masks, wigs, floppy hats or eye patches that block vision.
- 2) Tie hats/scarves securely so they don't slip over children's eyes.
- 3) Avoid pointed spears, swords or wands that may harm someone else's eyes.
- 4) Carry a bright flashlight to improve visibility.
- 5) Improper use of cosmetic lenses can lead to serious eye complications. These problems include bacterial infections, swelling, eye pain, sensitivity to light, pink eye, corneal scratches/ulceration or worse.

Fire Awareness Facts

Consider the following facts and figures taken from the National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) website:

Home Fires

- U.S. fire departments respond to an average of one home fire every 86 seconds.
- Between 2011 and 2015, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 358,500 home structure fires per year. These fires caused 12,300 civilian injuries, 2,510 civilian deaths, and \$6.7 billion in direct damage.
- On average, seven people per day die in U.S. home fires.
- Cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home-fire injuries.
- For decades, smoking has been the leading cause of home-fire deaths.
- Heating equipment was involved in one in every five home-fire deaths.

Escape Planning

- According to an NFPA survey, only one in every three American households has actually developed and practiced a home fire-escape plan.
- While 71% of Americans have an escape plan in case of a fire, only 47% of them have practiced it.
- One-third of American households who made an estimate thought they would have at least six minutes before a fire in their home became threatening. The time available is often less. And only 8% said their first thought upon hearing a smoke alarm would be to get out.

Smoke Alarms

- Smoke alarms provide an early warning of a fire, giving people additional time to escape.
- Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in a reported home fire in half.
- Three in every five home-fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms (38%) or no working smoke alarms (21%).
- When smoke alarms fail to operate, it is usually because batteries are missing, disconnected, or dead. Dead batteries caused one-quarter (24%) of the smoke alarm failures.
- Interconnected smoke alarms throughout the home increase safety. When one sounds, they all sound. It is especially important to have interconnected alarms if you sleep with the door closed.

Cooking

- Between 2011 and 2015, U.S. fire departments responded to a per year average of 170,200 home structure fires that involved cooking equipment. These fires caused a per year average of 510 civilian deaths, 5470 civilian injuries, and \$1.2 billion in direct property damage.
- From 2011 to 2015, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 466 home cooking fires per day.
- Unattended cooking is the leading factor contributing to these fires. Frying poses the greatest risk of fire.
- Ranges, or cooktops, accounted for the majority (62%) of home cooking-fire incidents. Ovens accounted for 13%.
- More than half of all cooking-fire injuries occurred when people tried to fight the fire themselves.
- Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires, followed by the day before Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and Easter.

Heating

- From 2009 to 2013, U.S. fire departments responded to 56,000 home structure fires that involved heating equipment. These fires caused 470 civilian fire deaths, 1,490 civilian injuries, and \$1 billion in direct property damage.
- The leading factor contributing to home-heating fires (30%) was a failure to clean. This usually involved creosote buildup in chimneys.
- Most home-heating fire deaths (84%) involved stationary or portable space heaters.
- Nearly half (49%) of all home-heating fires occurred in December, January, and February.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE



"Peanuts, lactose and gluten are fine. I'm checking for garlic."

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

If the plan
doesn't work
change the plan
but never
the goal.