

Safety Matters

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FIRE SAFETY FACTS



NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION MONTH

October is National Fire Prevention Month. Each year, more than 4,000 Americans die in fires, more than 25,000 are injured in fires, and more than 100 firefighters are killed while on duty. Eighty three percent of all civilian fire deaths occurred in residences. Many of these fires could have been prevented. Cooking is the third leading cause of fire deaths and the leading cause of injury among people ages 65 and older.

Direct loss due to fires is estimated at nearly **\$8.6 billion** annually. Intentionally set structure fires resulted in an estimated **\$664 million** in property damage.

In order to protect yourself, it is important to understand the basic characteristics of fire.

- **Fire is FAST.** In just two minutes, a fire can become life-threatening. In five minutes, a residence can be engulfed in flames.
- **Fire is DARK.** Fire produces gases that make you disoriented and drowsy. Instead of being awakened by a fire, you may fall into a deeper sleep. Asphyxiation is the leading cause of fire deaths, exceeding burns by a three- to- one ratio.
- **Fire is HOT.** Heat and smoke from fire can be more dangerous than the flames. Inhaling the superhot air can sear your lungs.

FIRE PREVENTION TIPS

BEFORE A FIRE

The following are things you can do to protect yourself, your family, and your property in the event of a fire:

SMOKE ALARMS AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

- Install smoke alarms. Properly working smoke alarms decrease your chances of dying in a fire by half.
- Place smoke alarms on every level of your residence, including the basement.
- Install a working carbon monoxide detector in the common area of the bedrooms.
- Test and clean smoke alarms once a month and replace batteries at least once a year (each October is suggested). Replace smoke alarms once every 10 years.

COOKING SAFETY

- Never leave cooking unattended.
- Always wear short or tight-fitting sleeves when you cook.
- Keep towels, pot holders and curtains away from flames
- Never use the range or oven to heat your home.
- Have the proper type fire extinguisher available and know how to properly use it

ESCAPING THE FIRE

- Have an escape plan. Review escape routes with your family.
- Make sure windows are not nailed or painted shut.
- Teach family members to stay low to the floor by crawling, where the air is safer, when escaping from a fire.
- In a high-rise, never lock or block fire exits or doorways, halls or stairways. Never prop stairway or other fire doors open. Fire doors are meant to slow the fire and give people more time to escape.

HEATING SOURCE

- If using space heaters at home, place them at least three feet away from flammable/combustible materials like newspapers, magazines, draperies, furniture, etc.
- Electric space heaters should always be directly plugged into a wall outlet, never an extension cord or power strip
- Use only the type of fuel designated for your space heater.

MATCHES/LIGHTERS AND SMOKING

- Keep matches/lighters away from children.
- Never smoke in bed or when drowsy or medicated.
- If you must smoke, do it responsibly.

ELECTRICAL WIRING

- Inspect extension cords for frayed or exposed wires or loose plugs
- Make sure outlets and switches have cover plates and no exposed wiring.
- Make sure wiring does not run under rugs, over nails, or across high traffic areas.
- Do not overload extension cords, power strips or outlets.

Inspect your home for fire safety and prevention on a regular basis!

(FIRE SAFETY FACTS ARTICLE CONTINUES AT THE TOP OF PAGE 2)

COVID-19 SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we must take extra precautions to protect ourselves, our families, and our community. Many resources are available to help us remain safe and healthy during these uncertain times. We encourage you to visit Delaware's COVID-19 website (de.gov/coronavirus) for the latest information on the State's response to the coronavirus disease. Testing sites can be found by visiting de.gov/gettested. For additional COVID-19-related guidance, please visit the CDC website (cdc.gov).

Let's review some of the basics regarding the proper COVID-19 precautions we each should take throughout our daily activities:

1). Practice proper hand hygiene as often as possible by washing your hands for a minimum of 20 seconds (sing or hum the Birthday song twice) with soap and warm water; be sure to concentrate on the palms of your hands, each finger and around the nail beds of each finger. If soap and water are not available use either hand sanitizers or wipes with at least 60% alcohol concentration.

Always wash your hands in these instances:

Before, during, and after preparing food

Before eating food

Before touching your eyes, nose or mouth because that's how germs enter our bodies

Before and after caring for someone who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea

Before and after treating a cut or wound

After using the rest room

After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the rest room

After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing

After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste

After handling pet food or pet treats

After touching garbage

After you have been in a public place and touched an item or surface that may be frequently touched by other people, such as door handles, tables, gas pumps, counters, shopping carts, or electronic cash registers/screens, etc.

2). Maintain physical distancing of not less than six (6) feet between yourself and others at all times.

3). Face masks are required at all times when out in public or while in areas where other people are (office areas, retail stores, etc.) Your face mask should cover both your nose and your mouth at all times. Follow proper procedures for the donning, removal and care/disposal of face masks.

4). Always use proper cough and sneeze etiquette.

5). Clean all high-touch surfaces regularly.

6) Consult medical professionals if exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever, cough, aches and pains, stomach upset, etc.

7). If you have been in close contact (e.g., within 6 feet for more than a few minutes) with a person with COVID-19 infection, then you should remain at home for 14 days from the time you were exposed to confirmed COVID-19. Stay home any time you feel sick.

Stay safe and healthy!

FIRE SAFETY FACTS

(Continued from page 1)

DURING A FIRE

If your clothes catch on fire, you should:

- Stop, drop, and roll until the fire is extinguished.

DO NOT PANIC

- Do not assume someone else already called the fire department; get out of the house then call the Fire Department.

ESCAPE A FIRE

- Check closed doors with the back of your hand to feel for heat before you open them.
- If the door is **hot** do not open it. Find a second way out, such as a window. If you cannot escape through a window, hang a white sheet outside the window to alert firefighters to your presence.
- Stuff the cracks around the door with towels, rags, bedding or tape and cover vents to keep smoke out.
- If there is a phone in the room where you are trapped, call the fire department again and tell them exactly where you are.
- If the door is cold slowly open it and ensure that fire and/or smoke is not blocking your escape route. If your escape route is blocked, shut the door and use another escape route.
- If clear, leave immediately and close the door behind you. Be prepared to crawl.

AFTER A FIRE

- Once you are out of the building, **STAY OUT!** Do not go back inside for any reason.
- If you are with a burn victim or are a burn victim yourself call 911, cool and loosely cover your burns until emergency units arrive.
- If you are a tenant contact the landlord.
- Tell the fire department if you know of anyone trapped in the building.
- Only enter when the fire department tells you it is safe to do so

FIRE SAFETY IS YOUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY...FIRE STOPS WITH YOU!

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH



HALLOWEEN RIDDLES

- 1). Why don't skeletons watch horror movies?
- 2). Why don't skeletons play music in church ?
- 3). What do you get if you divide the circumference of a jack-o-lantern by its diameter?
- 4). What did the ghost teacher say to the class?
- 5) What do birds give out on Halloween?

Answers in page 2 Sidebar

FIRE SAFETY RULES ... A-C-T, DON'T PANIC!

IN THE EVENT OF FIRE AT WORK, ACT:

A – ASSESS THE SITUATION

Identify the hazards: nature, degree, and auxiliary hazards
Determine who is threatened: co-workers, other employees, the public

C – CHOOSE YOUR RESPONSE

Select action level:
Individual action: extinguish a small contained fire
Limited response: involving others
Major response: with fire and rescue department

T – TAKE ACTION

SOUND THE ALARM

Warn co-workers and public
Call, meet, and direct fire department
Report to management

RESPONDING TO A FIRE

Isolate the area as much as possible by closing doors, etc.
Shut off required machinery, power, and gas
Activate automatic and/or manual fire extinguishers
Attempt to extinguish fire if it can be done without risk to your safety
Use extinguishers, hoses and equipment only if you are trained to operate them safely and effectively

EVACUATE

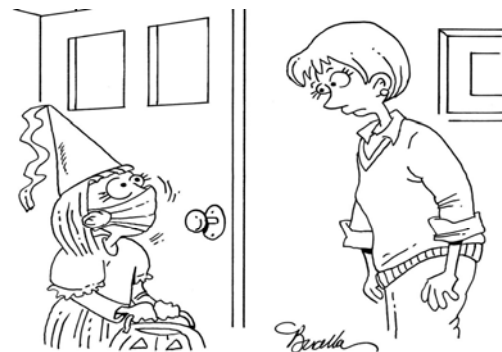
Evacuation rules: maintain order
Do not use elevators; help others
If caught in smoke: breathe through nose in quick short breaths and crawl along floor
Move to inside handrail of stairways, move in single file
Do not impede firefighters and other responders
Do not block stairways, exits, etc.
Do not reenter until told to do so
Move threatened vehicles

AVOIDING ELECTRICAL HAZARDS WHILE WORKING FROM HOME

If you have a home office or work from home please follow these electrical safety tips to keep you and your home safe from electrical hazards.

- 1) Avoid overloading outlets and do not, under any circumstances, daisy chain. **Daisy chaining** is a term that refers to the practice of plugging a power strip or extension cord into a power strip. This is **dangerous** because an excessive amount of power is being drawn from one single wall outlet, which means the power strip or wall receptacle could easily overload, overheat and catch fire.
- 2) Unplug appliances when not in use to save energy and minimize the risk of shock or fire
- 3) Regularly inspect electrical cords and extension cords for damage
- 4) Extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis; never for a period longer than 90 days. If an extension cord is needed longer than 90 days then a permanent outlet should be installed.
- 5) Never plug a space heater or fan into an extension cord or power strip
- 6) Never run cords under rugs / carpets, doors, or windows
- 7) Plug in smartly. Make sure cords do not become tripping hazards
- 8) Keep papers and other potential combustibles at least three feet away from space heaters and other heat sources
- 9) Make sure you use proper wattage for lamps / lighting
- 10) Make sure your home has smoke alarms. Test them monthly, change batteries yearly (each October during Fire Prevention Month is suggested), and replace the unit every 10 years

Wherever you work, it's always important to be safe.



"Alex won for the scariest costume. He wasn't wearing a mask."



HALLOWEEN RIDDLES ANSWERS

1. They don't have the guts!
2. They have no organs!
3. Pumpkin Pi
4. "Watch the board and I'll go through it again!"
5. Tweets!