

15 Tips for Fire Prevention

House fires can be more prevalent during winter when the air is drier and during the holiday season with the additional cooking and decoration dangers.

According to the Red Cross, house fires injure 36 every day, and over \$7 billion worth of property damage occur every year in the U.S. Take a look at 15 fire prevention tips to keep your loved ones and your home safe from fire.

1. Store ignitable objects such as matches and lighters safely out of children's reach. Use items with child-proof features and teach them never to play with such items.

2. Consider using flameless candles or other flameless sources of fragrance.

3. Avoid plugging in more than three strings into Christmas lights. Instead, use a power strip. Discard broken light strings, and always unplug before leaving the house or going to sleep.

4. Keep flammable objects at least three feet away from the lit fireplace. Keep a fire screen at the fireplace, and make sure the fire is fully extinguished before leaving the house or going to sleep.

5. Install smoke alarms with battery back-up on every level of the house, one in each bedroom and areas outside of bedrooms.

6. Inspect fire alarms once a month and remember to replace the batteries every year.

7. Educate children on what smoke alarms sound like and what to do when they go off.

8. Create an escape plan and practice it every six months. Every family member should know at least two ways to escape from every room and where to meet once they make it outside.

9. There are many house fire cases from unattended pets accidentally starting a fire. Be mindful of what your pets can access while you are away.

10. Avoid overloading outlets or extension cords.

11. Never leave space heaters, hot stove, and burning candles unattended. Keep flammable objects clear from around these items.

12. Maintain fire prevention tools such as fire alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, and fire sprinklers in working condition. Replace alarms every 10 years.

13. Keep a fire extinguisher at home and learn how to use and maintain it properly.

14. If an appliance starts to smoke or gives an unusual smell while in operation, it's a sign to unplug it immediately. Have it serviced to address the issue before using it again.

15. Replace cracked or frayed electrical cords. Never use them or leave them out.