

1. Have and Maintain a Working Smoke Detector

In less than two minutes, you can pass out or die from poisonous smoke. A smoke detector doubles your chances of surviving a fire. Smoke detectors let you know of a fire earlier, which means you and your family will have more time to escape.



- Install a working smoke detector in each room of your home. At a minimum, install one on each level of your home between the living area and sleeping area. Install the detector on the ceiling or on walls between 6-12 inches from the ceiling.
- Test smoke detectors at least monthly by pushing the test button until the alarm sounds. If the alarm does not sound, replace the battery and test again.
- Clean the smoke detector at least once a year. Dust with a vacuum cleaner.
- Replace the batteries each year.

2. Plan an Escape Route and Include a Meeting Place

In only three minutes, your home could be totally involved in fire. Be prepared by having a fire escape route planned.

- Draw a floor plan of your home and identify at least two ways out of each room, especially bedrooms, and talk with your family about the ways out. If you live on the second floor of a building or have bedrooms upstairs, have some type of ladder available that can assist you in getting to the ground.
- Young children will need special help in getting out. Make sure you have at least two ways to reach them to aid in their escape.
- Choose a meeting place outside the home, preferably the mail box. Never go back inside.
- Call the fire department from a neighbor's home.

3. Know How to Cook Safely

Burns and scalds can be deadly, especially to children under 5, who are at greatest risk of being burned.



- Use the back burners on stoves and turn pot handles to the back of the stove while cooking. If left within reach, a curious child might grab or knock a pot over onto them.
- Pay attention when cooking.
- Never leave food, especially grease, unattended on the stove.
- Grease fires should be covered with a cooking sheet or lid. Never put water on a grease fire because it will make the fire bigger.
- Never carry a child and hot foods/liquids at the same time.

4. Keep Your Family Warm ... the Safe Way

Heating related fires are the leading cause of fire deaths in South Carolina. In many cases, the equipment is not at fault. The user is.

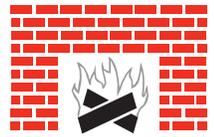
- When you buy a heater, make sure it meets a

testing laboratory's standard for safety.

- Follow manufacturers' instructions carefully when using electric and kerosene heaters. They can be dangerous when used improperly.
- Make sure heaters are at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn.
- Keep children away from the heaters.
- Replace any frayed or damaged heater cords to prevent fires.
- Turn heaters off when you leave or go to sleep.
- When using kerosene heaters, use only the fuel recommended by the manufacturer.
- Store kerosene and other flammable liquids outside the house in approved containers.
- Never fill the heater while it is operating or hot because vapors can ignite from the heat.
- Use proper ventilation to prevent carbon monoxide buildup, and be sure the heater has an automatic shutoff in case it is tipped over.

5. Keep Fire in the Fireplace

Order a chimney sweep's services to clean and inspect your fire place annually. Creosote buildup can ignite your chimney, roof and house.



- Do not use flammable liquids to start a fire in your fireplace.
- Keep a screen in front of the fire to keep embers from popping into the house.
- Make sure outside tree limbs are at least 10 feet away from the chimney.
- Put hot ashes in metal containers outside of the home to cool.

6. Know What to do if Your House Catches Fire

If your house catches on fire, you and your family need to get out quickly and safely.

- Put your fire escape plan in action.
- Stay low. Crawl under smoke. Smoke rises, and the cleaner air is closest to the floor.
- Help others in escaping if necessary.
- If your clothing catches on fire, don't run. Put it out by wrapping in a blanket or by stopping, dropping and rolling on the floor.
- Get out and stay out. Go to a meeting place in front of your house and make sure everyone is outside. Never let anyone go back inside the burning house.
- Call the fire department from a neighbor's home.

7. Protect Children From Scald Burns

In a matter of seconds, a child can get a life-threatening burn.

- Never leave children alone in the bathroom or kitchen.
- Use the back burners on stoves and turn pot handles to the back of the stove while cooking.
- Never carry a child and hot foods/liquids at the same time.
- Electrical cords should be kept away from the edge of the counter.
- Adjust water heaters to 120 degrees F or less.
- Install anti-scald devices on bathtub faucets and

showerheads.

- Test the water temperature before putting a child in the bathtub or shower.

8. Know the Dangers of Smoking and Playing With Matches and Lighters

Many deadly fires each year are the direct result of smoking and children playing with matches and lighters.

- Never smoke in bed or when you are drowsy.
- Check both sides of your couch and all chair cushions for dropped ashes.
- Use large, deep ashtrays to avoid a lit cigarette from dropping onto combustibles, such as furniture or clothing.
- Do not empty ashtrays shortly after smoking. Wait several hours so that smoldering embers will be completely extinguished.
- Do not leave cigarettes unattended.
- Do not smoke or light matches near flammable material.
- Supervise senior citizens while they smoke.
- Use only child-resistant lighters, and store all matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
- Teach children that matches and lighters are for adult use only. Also, teach them to tell adults if they find matches or lighters.



9. Know How to Use Fireworks Safely

When used incorrectly, fireworks can be a dangerous fire hazard.

- Read and follow directions.
- Don't let young children play with fireworks. Adults should supervise all use of fireworks.
- Do not try to fix broken fireworks, and never re-ignite used extinguished fireworks.
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place.



- Keep fireworks out of your pockets.
- Should your clothes catch on fire, remember to stop, drop and roll.

10. Don't Forget Fire Safety on Holidays.

Candles symbolize joy, warmth, security and light during the holidays. If you use candles in your household for decoration, keep flames away from combustibles. Do not leave a candle unattended.



- Keep children away from candles and fireplaces.
- Make sure the Christmas tree – real or artificial – is at least 3 feet away from fireplaces, radiators, space heaters, heating vents and other sources of heat.
- Keep Christmas trees well watered. Check your tree daily for moisture. If the branches become brittle or needles continuously fall off the tree, you may not be watering enough.
- Use approved Christmas lights for your tree. Use indoor lights inside and outdoor lights outside.
- Do not overload electric outlets or overuse extension cords. This can start a fire inside your walls.
- Check light strings carefully for cracked sockets, frayed, loose or bare wires and loose connections. Follow manufacturers' instructions when repairing decorations.
- Keep electrical light strands and decorations out of the reach of children.
- Turn lights off before going to bed or leaving the house.
- Do not block doorways or hallways with your tree. In a fire, all exits should be accessible.

For more fire safety information, contact the State Fire Marshal's Office at (803) 896-9800 or your local fire department.

Survivor or **Statistic** ?

Get Fire Smart.

Life-Saving Facts About Fire