

Home Exit Plan

**FIRE SAFETY
& PREVENTION**

*Smoke
Detectors*



Extinguisher

**FOR YOUR MANUFACTURED
HOME & COMMUNITY**

INTRODUCTION

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Did you know that in 1999, according to the National Fire Protection Association, 3,570 Americans were killed and another 21,875 were injured as a result of fire? Direct property loss due to fires was estimated at \$10 billion. Fire killed more Americans than all natural disasters combined, and 82% of all fire deaths occurred in residences. What can you do to reduce the risk of becoming one of those statistics? This brochure highlights steps you can take to protect your family, home and community. Included are tips on preventative home maintenance, kitchen safety, fire drills and smoke detectors. Also included are ways for a community

owner to conform to the Uniform Fire Code without incurring great expense. Remember, protect yourself; prevention is the best way to keep your property and your family safe from fire.



PROPER MAINTENANCE CAN PREVENT FIRES

Several mechanical systems in a home require maintenance. These systems include heating equipment such as furnaces, flues, fireplaces, space heaters, wood stoves, water heaters, kitchen stoves as well as electrical systems and electrical appliances. The bad news: if these systems aren't properly maintained, the potential for fire increases. The good news: fires in all these systems are easily preventable.

- Be careful not to overload electrical circuits. Lights that flicker or dim indicate trouble that must be corrected. When replacing fuses, install only recommended fuses. Use fuses and breakers that are the proper size for the wire. A ground monitor is a valuable tool for locating any shorts or other problems in the electrical system. If you are inexperienced in working with electricity, don't try to correct electrical problems yourself. Call a qualified electrician.
- Don't overextend or overload an electrical outlet. In many older homes, the capacity of the wiring system has not kept pace with today's modern appliances and overloaded electrical systems invite fire. Replace frayed

or broken electrical cords. Make sure all appliances are properly installed. Buy electrical appliances and equipment approved by a certified testing laboratory. Never use a light bulb with wattage that is too high for the fixture. Never run a cord under rugs or twist it around nails or hooks. Keep dust from accumulating on televisions, electrical equipment and appliances.

- Give Space Heaters Space. Keep electric portable space heaters at least three feet from everything – including you! Just brushing against one could set your clothing on fire. Don't leave space heaters on when you're not in the room. Don't use extension cords with electrical space heaters. The high amount of current they require could melt the cord and start a fire. ***Never use a gas or electrical range or oven as a substitute for a furnace or space heater.***
- Dangerous heat can build up in a dryer. Never leave home with the clothes dryer running. Dryers must be vented to the outside, not into a wall or attic. Clean the lint screen frequently to keep the airway clear. Never put in synthetic fabrics, plastic, rubber or foam because they retain heat.



- Check for worn spots on any heat tape that covers water pipes.
- Check stove pilot light and wiring periodically.
- Ground your TV antenna to prevent damage from a lightning strike.

BE KITCHEN WISE

- *Never leave cooking unattended.* Do not leave pots on hot burners. Wear clothes with tight fitting sleeves when you cook. An electrical coil on the stove reaches a temperature of 800°. A gas flame goes over 1,000°. Your dishtowel or potholder can catch fire at 400°. So can your bathrobe, apron or loose sleeve. Always set a kitchen timer to remind you to turn off the burners and oven. Keep children's toys and crafts away from stove tops and ovens.
- *Keep one fire extinguisher in the kitchen and another near the furnace.* Small home fire extinguishers operate for only five to ten seconds, so be sure of your aim. Keep it ten feet away from the stove on the exit side of the kitchen. Learn how to use your fire extinguisher before there is an emergency and use it on small fires only. If there is a large fire, get out immediately and call 911 from another location.
- *Never pour water on a grease fire.* Instead turn off the stove and cover the pan with a lid or close the oven door.
- *Clean the exhaust hood and duct over the stove regularly.*
- *Operate your microwave only when there is food in it.*



SMOKE DETECTORS

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- *Install smoke detectors on every level of your home and outside of sleeping areas. Test every detector at least once a month. Change batteries twice a year. An easy way to remember is to change the batteries in the spring and fall when you change your clocks for daylight savings time.*
- Keep smoke detectors dust free.
- Inexpensive smoke detectors are available for the hearing impaired.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors next to your smoke detectors. Test these and change the batteries the same as your smoke detectors.



MAKE AN EXIT PLAN

- *Prepare a floor plan of your home.* Show at least two ways out of each room.
- *Hold fire drills at least two times a year.* If you have very young or elderly people in your home, assign someone to help them. Children will find it easier during a real emergency to remember what they did during the fire drill rather than just what Mom or Dad told them to do.
- *Sleep with your bedroom door closed.* A closed door will help to hold back heat and smoke. However, if a door feels hot, do not open it, escape through another door or window. It is a good idea to keep a pair of old shoes near the bed. They will protect your feet from embers, hot objects and broken glass that may be encountered during an evacuation. It is also easier to climb out of a window and jump with shoes on instead of bare feet.

MAKE AN EXIT PLAN (CONT.)

- *Exit windows.* Make sure that at least one window in every bedroom can be used for easy and fast escape in case of fire. Don't attempt to reach the front or rear door during a fire when you have close access to a nearby window; attempt to use a window as your exit. Easy-to-use window escape ladders are available through many catalogues and outlet stores.
- *Agree on a fixed location out-of-doors where family members are to gather for a head count.* Stay together away from the fire and make certain that no one goes back inside the burning structure.
- *Call 911 from another location.*
- *Keep corridors and stairways free of obstructions and combustibles.*



CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN

- One-fourth of all fire deaths of children are from fires started by children. Never leave children unattended with fire, space heaters or ovens and stoves that are in use. Keep all lighters and matches out of reach of children.
- Children are naturally curious about fire. Keep an eye on them, but if a child repeatedly plays with fire or seems to have an unusual fascination with fire, seek professional help at once.
- Be sure they know the exit plan. Review your emergency exit plan and practice the fire drill with

your youngsters.

Again, an easy way to remember to practice is to do so when the time changes in the spring and fall.



SMOKING

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- Never smoke in bed. Never smoke while drinking alcohol or while you are on medication that could make you drowsy or disorientated. Smoking in bed remains the most common scenario for fatal house fires.
- Use large, deep, non-tipping ashtrays. Do not dump cigarettes or ashes directly in trash can. Empty ashtrays often and wet the contents before dumping into the trash.



HAZARDOUS MATERIAL

- Store flammable liquids only at approved locations.
- Keep in a safe place. Store household cleaners on separate shelves. Store those items in a secure cabinet with a child-safety lock that is out of reach of their little hands.
- Don't fill a lawn mower, snowblower or other motor with gas or oil while it is hot. Let it cool first. Gas up equipment outside, away from enclosed areas and any source of sparks or heat. Start the equipment 10 feet from where you filled it with fuel.
- Never clean floors or do other general cleaning with gasoline or flammable liquids.

LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

- When combustible, follow manufacturers' instructions when using fertilizers and pesticides.
- To provide a fire break around your home, mow and irrigate your lawn frequently.
- Mow your lawn regularly. Be sure the irrigation system is well maintained. Dispose of cuttings and debris promptly, according to local regulations. Keep trees and shrubs pruned and remove leaf clutter and dead and overhanging branches.
- Store firewood away from the house.



UNIFORM FIRE CODE FOR YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY

The Uniform Fire Code '91 edition states the following:

1. No parking within 15 feet of a fire hydrant, both directions from the hydrant.
 2. 25 feet clearance in front (curb side) of a fire hydrant.
 3. 3 feet clearance on all other sides of a fire hydrant.
 4. Standard annual maintenance consists of opening the hydrant valve to ensure water availability, oiling the stems, keeping the hydrant freshly painted (check with your local fire department for the correct color) and cleaning the threads of the caps and outlets.
 5. Protection barricades are required if the hydrant is within 2 feet of a street without a curb.
 6. A flow test is required every five years and must be done by a certified fire equipment technician.
- It would be wise to assume that the local fire station has a map of your community showing hydrant locations and/or other sources of water (i.e., standpipes, streams, ponds, pools, garden hose, wells, etc.). Also, the map should show access to and exit from the community.

- Automobile parking on any street of less than 32 feet wide is not allowed per Title 25 of the California Health and Safety Code. The street must be over 40 feet wide before parking on both sides is permitted.
- If you add or repair a hydrant, make sure that you first obtain all of the appropriate permits and approvals from the authorities and make sure that you use a qualified, licensed contractor to do the work. If you have an inoperative fire hydrant, you should have the hydrant properly repaired as soon as possible.
- On the subject of fire safety ... do your employees know the location of and do they have the ability to use a fire extinguisher at the time of an emergency? Does the manager check your extinguishers on a monthly basis and does a state-licensed technician service them annually? Do you have a safe refuge area where your employees will meet for roll call and task assignments in the event of an emergency? Make sure that all employees know what to do if a fire occurs. A simple plan would be:

1. Call 911
2. Perform necessary First Aid
3. Meet at pre-determined locations or “rally” points
4. Activate sprinkler system and/or fire fighting equipment
5. Assist in any required evacuations

UNIFORM FIRE CODE (CONT.)

- Make sure that the perimeters of your community are free from dry brush or other flammable materials.
- Make sure that your sprinkler systems are working and that all sprinklers are working at full capacity. If the system is on an automatic timer, make sure that all employees know how to de-activate the timers so that the sprinklers can be turned on at any time if a fire approaches your community.
- Buy the donuts, put on the coffeepot and invite your local fire station for a walk-through (pre-plan) so you can view your community through the eyes of the personnel that will be responding to your community

in case of an emergency.

- Remember, the most important words in fire safety are:

***“ALWAYS BE
PREPARED.”***



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