



## Fight Fire Before It Starts

Use this guide and these tips as a check list and to give it careful consideration. Then take preventive measures to help stop fire before it has a chance to get started.

- **Consult Your Local Fire Fighter**
  - Many local fire departments have inspection programs. Check with your fire department for advice about placing smoke alarms, purchasing fire extinguishers, and devising emergency escape plans.
- **Keep a Clean House**
  - Do not let old papers and trash gather in closets, the attic, the basement/basement stairs, and garage. Throw rubbish/trash out regularly.
- **Do Not Let Rags Collect**
  - Keep oily, greasy or paint-smeared rags in closed metal containers until disposed of properly. Do not keep them in the house. This will guard against spontaneous combustion.
- **Use Flashlights Instead of Flames**
  - Do not use match or candles to light the way in the attic, closets or basement.
- **Have Family Fire Exit Drills**
  - Plan in advance what escape routes you will use and designate a meeting place. Have an alternate route planned in case flames block your way. Make sure to instruct your baby sitters on what to do in case of fire.
- **Install Smoke Detectors**
  - In each occupied floor, including the basement, and within 15 feet of each sleeping room, which is the law in most states. Check detectors once a month, and change the battery once a year or as needed.
- **Keep Fire Ladders Handy**
  - Place ladders near windows of upstairs bedrooms. Remember, fire escape ladders save lives.



- **Safeguard Your Chimney and Fire Place**
  - Use a rain-cap with a metal screen to catch sparks from the chimney. Chimneys should be checked/cleaned prior to the heating season. Be sure to use a fire screen. Before you go to sleep, make sure the fire is out. Never discard hot ashes inside or near the home outside. Place them in a metal container outside and well away from the house.
- **Inspect Furnaces and Heating Systems Annually**
  - Do not overlook your heat system. Have it inspected and cleaned yearly. Be sure to only burn fuels that are recommended by the manufacturer.
- **Keep Important and Emergency Numbers Visible**
  - Post your fire department and local emergency telephone numbers near all phones.