Fire Safe Seniors

How to Prevent Fires in Your Home

Home fires are often caused by smoking, cooking, and heating in the home.
You can prevent fires by following these tips:

IF YOU SMOKE...

- Never smoke when you are lying down, drowsy, or in bed. Smoking is the #1 cause of home fires that kill older adults.
- Use large, deep, tip-resistant ashtrays and place them on a flat surface. This will keep ashes from falling onto a nearby area that might burn.
- Wet cigarette butts and ashes before emptying them into the trash.
- Smoke outside, if possible.
- Never smoke near oxygen tanks.

IF YOU COOK BY USING THE STOVE...

- Keep an eye on what you fry. Most cooking fires start when someone is frying food.
- Wear short sleeves or roll them up so they don't catch on fire.
- Move things that can burn away from the stove.
- Don't cook if you are drowsy from alcohol or medicine.
- Use oven mitts to handle hot pans.
- If a pan of food catches fire, slide a lid over it and turn off the burner.

IF YOU USE A SPACE HEATER...

- Keep the heater 3 feet away from anything that can burn, including you.
- Unplug heaters when you aren't using them, including when you leave your home or go to bed.
- Consider getting heaters that are designed to turn off if they tip over.

IF YOU USE A FIREPLACE, WOOD STOVE, OR COAL STOVE...

- Have a professional clean and inspect your fireplace, wood stove, or coal stove once a year. Look in the phone book under "chimney cleaning" to find a professional near you.
- Do not burn green wood, artificial logs, boxes, or trash.
- Use a metal mesh fireplace screen to keep sparks inside.
- If your fireplace has glass doors, leave them open while burning a fire.

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Fire is **Everyone's Fight**™